DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 302 322 PS 017 664

AUTHOR Bard, Rachel; And Others
TITLE Hunger in Washington State. A Report by the Governor's Task Force on Hunger.
INSTITUTION Washington Governor's Task Force on Hunger, Olympia.
PUB DATE Oct 88
NOTE 60p.
PUB TYPE Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Delivery Systems; *Etiology; Federal Programs; *Hunger; *Individual Needs; *Program Development; Social Problems; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS Food Distribution Programs; *Washington

ABSTRACT

Governor Booth Gardner established the Governor's Task Force on Hunger in 1986 and asked its members to study the problem of hunger in Washington State over a 2-year period. The task force conducted its work through three main committees: one to survey the nature and extent of hunger in the state, one to uncover major causes of hunger, and one to examine food assistance programs. Summaries of the findings of the committees are included in the six chapters of this report. In general, the report documents the existence of a serious hunger problem in the state, outlines causes of hunger, and describes current food assistance programs and the barriers that prevent them from more effectively addressing the problem. The report offers a set of 38 recommendations that provide the basis for legislative action at the State and Federal level, for administrative changes designed to improve access to help by the hungry, and for improving the effectiveness of private sector efforts. Included is a chart showing which recommendations should be implemented first. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED302322

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

X Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

WASHINGTON STATE

A Report by the Governor's Task Force on Hunger October 1988

PS 017664

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Linda K. Stone
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Members of Governor's Task Force on Hunger

Donald K. North, Chair
President, Burlington Northern Foundation, Seattle

Jan Putnam, Vice-Chair
Director, Thurston County Food Bank, Olympia

Rita Brogan
Superintendent of Public Transit Development, METRO, Seattle

Kathleen D. Clark
Nutritionist, Tumwater

Robert Dalgleish
Director, Operation First Harvest, Redmond;
Director, the Northwest Christian Community Foundation

Michael Esquivel, Chair, Root Causes Committee
Migrant Transfer System, Sunnyside

Stephen C. Forman, Chair, Profile Committee
Staff Assistant to King County Executive, Seattle

Beverly W. Gabrio, Ph.D.
Member, Board of Directors, Food Lifeline, Bellevue

Kay Haynes
Executive Director, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing, Yakima

Deloria Jones
Vice-President and Manager for Community and Public Relations,
Washington Mutual Financial Group, Seattle

Peter A. Kerwien
Manager, Market Development, Washington Water Power, Spokane

Bruce Pennell, Chair, Systems Effectiveness Committee
Executive Director, Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development
Association, Colville

Dick Rhodes
President, Food Markets Northwest, Inc., Seattle

Bill Tsoukalas
Boys and Girls Clubs of Snohomish County, Everett

Robert L. Stilger
Executive Director, Northwest Regional Foundation, Spokane

George Walker
Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer-Washington,
US WEST Communications, Seattle

Task Force Staff

Linda Stone, Project Director

Research Assistants:

Jon Quinn-Hurst Scott Nicholson

Practicum Students:

Trish Lopez Hans Gomez

Task Force Liaisons with the Governor's Office

Mari Clack Kathryn Freidt

Report Credits

Written by Rachel Bard, Joan Whiley, Linda Stone
Cover and report design by Kate Race, SAFECO and Stephen Ahlbom
Production coordination by Claire Bishop, SAFECO
Printing courtesy of SAFECO
Consultation from Clark Kokich, Borders, Perrin and Norrander, Seattle

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Mandate of the Task Force	3
Letter of Submittal	4
Chapter 1: Our Hunger Problem	5
Chapter 2: Facing the Facts	9
Chapter 3: Why Hunger Exists	15
Chapter 4: Current Systems: Strengths and Weaknesses	23
Chapter 5: What Can We Do?	33
Chapter 6: What We Stand To Gain—or Lose	43
Acknowledgements	47
Photo Credits	55

THE MANDATE OF THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON HUNGER

Governor Booth Gardner established the Governor's Task Force on Hunger in 1986, with a two-year assignment to study the problem of hunger in Washington State. As stated in the Governor's Executive Order,

> "The State of Washington needs to better document the extent and nature of hunger in our state and to identify the underlying causes of hunger and malnutrition in order to be able to clearly articulate the need for food and resources to help those in need. This new Task Force is created to work in partnership with the private sector in searching for the answers to these questions."

Governor Gardner set the following primary responsibilities for the Task Force:

> "1. It will produce a report on the extent and nature of hunger in Washington State and will recommend specific actions to be undertaken by public and private sectors to address hunger problems.
>
> 2. It will advise the Governor on critical food assistance issues which confront people within the state and advise the Governor on any proposed legislation pertaining to hunger and food assistance issues."

The 18 members whom the Governor appointed to the Task Force reflect the diversity of the state, both geographically and in background and interests. They were selected from food assistance providers, corporate executives, community action agency staff, public policy analysts, advocates and volunteers, the food industry, and many others who are concerned about the quality of life in Washington State.

Primary funding for support of the Task Force during its two-year tenure was provided by the Burlington Northern Foundation, reinforcing the public-private partnership of the group. Other funders are listed in the Acknowledgements at the end of this report.

The Task Force conducted its work through three main committees: one to survey the nature and extent of hunger in the state, one to uncover the major causes of hunger, and one to examine food assistance programs. Summaries of the findings of these committees follow in this report. The entire Task Force met frequently to review progress, and collaborated in formulating the recommendations based on their findings.

Throughout the research, the Task Force involved interested people in the state as much as possible: resource people in food assistance and advocacy, economic development and state government; representatives of both the public and the private sector. Their assistance was invaluable in setting the agenda, providing information on problems, needs and solutions, and reviewing Task Force reports and recommendations in draft form. Hundreds were involved, and many of them are listed in the Acknowledgements section.

STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BOOTH GARDNER
GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON HUNGER
E. 525 Mission
Spokane, Washington 99202-1824
(509) 489-6712

August 24, 1988

The Honorable Booth Gardner
Governor, State of Washington
The State Capitol
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Governor Gardner,

We are pleased to submit to you the final report of the Governor's Task Force on Hunger. **Hunger in Washington State** is the product of two years of work by the Task Force, work that has involved hundreds of people who have provided us with information, insight and ideas. It provides a firm foundation for your future efforts to end hunger in Washington.

As you begin to act on the recommendations in our report, We ask that you keep several key ideas in mind:

Hunger is prevalent in low income families in this state. Children go to bed hungry because their parents lack adequate resources to provide them with food.

Many people who are hungry in Washington make use of all available public and private food assistance programs – and they still are hungry.

The basic problem stems from the fact that this state has insufficient jobs with wages which bring families above the poverty level.

While efforts are made to improve the economy of the state, other measures are necessary to reduce hunger. Namely,

- Administrative changes in state government which cost little or no money will increase the amount of food assistance available to low income families.
- Increased public and private support for food banks and other private food assistance programs is needed to help them in coping with the feeding emergency which exists.
- Washington State needs to increase state spending in specific, targeted areas to reduce hunger.
- You need to work with our Congressional delegation to change, improve and strengthen certain federal laws which pertain to poverty and hunger.

We do not make these requests of you lightly. They follow two years in which we have spoken with literally thousands of people throughout the state and nation. We believe we have learned some important things about hunger and about how to begin to end it.

We do not necessarily claim that the state has a responsibility to end hunger. However, we believe that your administration has an opportunity to act in ways which will dramatically improve the current and future quality of life of tens of thousands of people in Washington.

Hunger is now endemic in this state. It need not be. We urge you to act and we thank you for this privilege of service.

Sincerely
Donald K. North
Donald K. North
Chair, Governor's Task Force on Hunger

Don North, Chair
Burlington Northern Foundation
Seattle

Jan Putnam, Vice-Chair
Thurston County Food Bank
Olympia

Rita Brogan
METRO
Seattle

Kathleen D. Clark
Nutritionist
Tumwater

Robert Dalgleish
Operation First Harvest
Redmond

Michael Esquivel
Migrant Transfer System
Sunnyside

Stephen C. Forman
The Municipal League
Seattle

Beverly W. Gabrio, PhD
Food Lifeline
Bellevue

Kay Haynes
Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing
Yakima

Dolores Jones
Washington Mutual
Seattle

Peter Kerwien
Washington Water Power
Spokane

Nancy McKain
Omak

Carol McKannay
NW Regional Food Network
Bingen

Bruce Pennell
Northeast Washington Rural Resources
Colville

Dick Rhodes
Food Markets NW

William Tsoukalas
Boys & Girls Clubs
Everett

Robert L. Stilger
Northwest Regional Foundation
Spokane

George Walker
Pacific Northwest Ball
Seattle

Linda Stone
Coordinator

HUNGER IN WASHINGTON STATE

1. OUR HUNGER PROBLEM

If you are not hungry yourself, or living in poverty, or involved in helping those who are, it is all too easy to be ignorant of the misfortune and misery of others.

But the facts and figures bring it home. There is no doubt that our state is part of a national pattern of widespread, growing hunger.

Despite impressive economic growth, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. Nationally, it is hard to document the existence or degree of hunger precisely; few widespread surveys have been made, and even when asked, many of those affected are unwilling to admit—whether through shame, fear or insecurity—how severely they or their families are suffering from lack of food. But it is estimated that 32 million Americans are currently living below the poverty level. That is, their income is below the minimum set by the federal government as sufficient to purchase an adequate diet.

Here in Washington, our studies indicate that the situation is probably even worse than the national average. We know that more than a tenth of our state's citizens—some 547,000 men, women and children—are living below the poverty level. And recent studies by this Task Force show that in community after community, children go to bed hungry. The elderly skimp on essential food in order to pay the rent or the heat. Families eligible for food stamps or other assistance can't get help—they are stymied by the system.

"All six of my children are eligible for school breakfasts and they're hungry but the bus gets them there too late."

— Survey respondent

As we will see later in this report, hunger exists in Washington State across a broad spectrum: among the homeless, in families, in the elderly, in minority populations, and in every area of the state.

"The children always had something to eat. Sometimes I didn't."

—Survey respondent

Yet we are told that we are on an economic upswing. Why is the hunger problem getting worse instead of better? Is it the fault of the systems designed to deal with it? Have we ceased to care as much as we did about human dignity and wellbeing? Should we look beyond the most visible symptoms and deal with the basic causes of poverty: underemployment and unemployment, low minimum wage, lack of education, inequities in the tax system, etc.? These matters, too, we will discuss.

Though many may avert their eyes and their minds, the problems are real and they are severe. Unless concerted action is taken now, they will only multiply until the cost of attacking them becomes frighteningly high. For humanitarian as well as hard economic reasons, we must face the facts.

The purpose of the Task Force report

This report is a first step to action. It documents the existence of a serious hunger problem in our state, outlines the major causes of hunger and describes current food assistance programs, along with the barriers that prevent them from more effectively addressing the problem. The Task Force offers a set of 38 recommendations, which provide the basis for legislative action at the state and federal level, for administrative changes designed to improve access to help by the hungry, and for improving the effectiveness of private sector efforts.

The Task Force has further developed a chart, found at the close of Chapter 5, showing which recommendations should be implemented first at the state and federal legislative and administrative levels, in order to begin the alleviation of hunger in Washington State.

This report is a summary of the Task Force's two years of work. More detailed information is contained in the following appendices, available from the Task Force:

Profile of Hunger in Washington State

The Major Causes of Hunger in Washington State

Food Assistance in Washington State

Organization of Task Force efforts

For the purposes of the Task Force's work, hunger is defined as "the inability to obtain the needed quantity and/or quality of food because of lack of resources."

From this starting point, the group set out to focus on these three areas:

1. Documenting the problem of hunger in the state

The focus of this effort was to discover how widespread hunger was in the state, and to describe characteristics of families and individuals who experienced hunger. Primary information was obtained from two major surveys, focusing on the elderly and on families with children.

The Senior Survey collected data statewide, with the assistance of Area Agencies on Aging and Senior Nutrition Programs. The survey questionnaire was based on one developed by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), a Washington, D.C. hunger research organization.

The survey on hunger in families with children was a pioneer effort. Washington State was the first target site in the nation to use the methodology developed recently for the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) of FRAC. The Task Force was fortunate in being able to apply the CCHIP survey in Washington State, since it provided a scientifically correct methodology for looking at neighborhood hunger while permitting execution by community organizations without extensive technical expertise.

A summary of the Task Force findings on the nature and extent of hunger will be found in Chapter 2 of this report, and the complete findings in the separate Appendix, "Profile of Hunger in Washington State," available from the Task Force.

2. Identifying the major causes of hunger.

The Task Force identified the major factors that contribute to hunger and poverty in Washington State, preparing the way for recommendations for possible solutions. Results of this work will be summarized in Chapter 3, with the complete report in the Appendix, "The Major Causes of Hunger in Washington State," available from the Task Force.

3. Examining the effectiveness of existing food assistance programs.

The third element of the Task Force work was an examination of assistance programs: both private, such as food banks and feeding programs; and public, such as the Food Stamp Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). After study of the programs and evaluation of their effectiveness, the Task Force recommended ways to improve the services. A summary of these findings will be found in Chapter 4 of this report, and the complete research report in the third Appendix, "Food Assistance in Washington State," available from the Task Force.

Task Force recommendations

After soliciting comments from other professionals inside and outside of our state, the Task Force agreed on 38 recommendations for action.

A number of the recommendations concern changes that should be made in food assistance programs to deal more effectively with the immediate *problem* of hunger: *lack of food.* This group of recommendations has a three-fold focus:

1. To insure that maximum benefit is derived from existing programs.
2. To remove barriers that limit availability of help.
3. To increase the amount of assistance available, in order to more adequately provide food and nutrition to families and individuals in need.

These recommendations were made in the following areas:

Food Stamps

Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Child Nutrition

Senior Nutrition

Federal Surplus Commodities (TEFAP)

State Emergency Food Assistance Program

Food Banks and Food Bank Coalitions

Additional recommendations developed by the Task Force address the immediate *cause* of hunger: *lack of income.* They are drawn from the Task Force's examination of the factors influencing the increase in hunger in the state. Of necessity, these recommendations are more general. Their purpose in the report is to indicate the direct link between hunger and broader issues influencing income and poverty in Washington State. They are not intended to replace a more detailed examination of these issues, which could result in more specific responses.

The Task Force recommends both direct and indirect measures addressing the issue of income, in these areas:

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)/Family Independence Program (FIP)

State Minimum Wage

Child Support

Child Care

Housing

Medical Insurance

Economic Development

Tax Reform

Education

Community Support

The complete recommendations, with a priority chart, will be found in Chapter 5 of this report.

Reasons to hope

Dismaying as the present situation is, the Task Force found reason for hope that we can eradicate hunger. The history of our nation bears this out. In the 1960s, hunger and malnutrition were reaching alarming proportions in this country. Concerned church groups, university researchers, national organizations such as the Physician Task Force on Hunger, and governmental agencies set out to document the problem. Their findings aroused the public, legislative representatives and the national administration. There was widespread support for strong remedies enacted by the government. Between 1970 and 1980, the Food Stamp program was extended from two million to twenty million Americans. Free school lunch and breakfast programs were expanded. Feeding programs for the elderly were initiated. The WIC program was established to provide adequate nutrition for pregnant women and their infants.

The programs bore fruit, and by the late 1970s hunger had ceased to be the serious problem it had been a decade earlier.

Now, however, with cuts in funding, many of the systems are breaking down, in our state as well as nationally. Although there is enough food to feed the hungry, it is not reaching them, for a variety of reasons. Erosion of the state's and the nation's health and productivity is already evident because of hunger and accompanying poverty. The longer we postpone action, the harder—and more costly—the remedies.

The consensus of the Task Force is that the problem of hunger in Washington State can be solved. It requires public awareness and public will, a reexamination of the value we place on individual welfare, and increased community involvement.

It will also require courage on the part of our state government to take bold action. All in all, a large order. But the problem is large, and it will not go away by itself. The first step in the solution is to understand what faces us.

"I want to be able to feed my family better. But it seems like every time I think I'm going to make it, the door gets slammed in my face again. Right now I don't know where to turn."

—Survey respondent

2. FACING THE FACTS

FACT ONE: Children in Washington State are hungry.

Four out of five low-income families with children interviewed by the Task Force in Seattle, Yakima and Pend Oreille County experienced at least one food shortage problem due to lack of resources. Moreover, from 21 to 42 percent of these families experienced severe monthly food shortages that directly affect children.

FACT TWO: Senior citizens in Washington State are hungry.

Half the senior citizens surveyed did not always have enough money to buy the food they needed. One in 15 had gone without food at least one day in the previous month, one in five would have done so without the help of the community Senior Nutrition Program.

FACT THREE: Support systems are not doing the job.

Even when using all available systems and supports, from food banks to borrowing, many families still lack enough food several days a month; parents go without to feed the children; and children go to bed hungry.

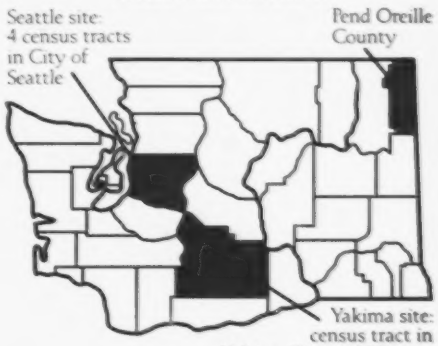
These facts, based on research by the Governor's Task Force on Hunger during the past two years, tell us that hunger is a major problem in Washington State. Task Force research to determine the extent of hunger in the state and characteristics of hungry people focused on two groups: families with children, and the elderly. It is well documented that lack of proper nutrition has a negative effect on child development and the health of seniors.

A summary of the results of these surveys is presented here; complete data will be found in the Appendix, "Profile of Hunger in Washington State."

Hunger in families with children

For the study of families with children in Washington State, the Task Force adopted a methodology developed by the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) in Washington, D.C. The availability of the CCHIP study meant the Task Force could take advantage of a previously tested effort to use scientific methods to examine and document hunger. It also offered the opportunity to compare Washington's findings later with other CCHIP studies conducted across the country in the future.

FAMILY SURVEY SITES, WASHINGTON STATE



How surveys were conducted

Survey sites were selected to characterize major types of poverty in the state: rural poverty in Eastern Washington, urban and rural poverty in Central Washington, and urban poverty in Western Washington. Although no statewide prevalence figures could be scientifically drawn from the data, the Task Force could obtain a clear picture of hunger and poverty

in each site. This provides insight into the statewide problem, as well as valuable information for policy makers.

Selection of specific sites in each area was based on concentration of families with children and concentration of poverty among these families. In addition, families within each site were targeted who had income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level—that is, below $20,726 for a family of four. The focus on low-income families, rather than on all families, would provide more data on how these families cope with hunger and food shortages. Survey sites were Pend Oreille County in Eastern Washington; a census tract in Yakima and the entire town of Wapato in Central Washington; and four census tracts in Seattle in Western Washington.

The study included a broad cross-section of the state's population: whites, Native Americans, Spanish-speaking farm workers, recent Southeast Asian immigrants and blacks. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish for use in Yakima and Wapato, and in Seattle bilingual interviewers visited non-English-speaking Southeast Asian families.

Each interview was conducted in the home and lasted about 45 minutes. Much of the content was personal and sensitive. Interviewers were recruited primarily from the target communities and trained extensively by the Task Force and CCHIP staff.

Families interviewed were not simply asked whether or not they were experiencing hunger. Instead, questions probed for more information to gauge the extent and intensity of food shortages and their impact on children. Other information concerned use of food assistance programs, household education and employment, income and expenses.

Family Survey
Hunger Scale Questions

1. **Does your household ever run out of money to buy food to make a meal?**
2. **Do you or members of your household ever eat less than you feel you should because there is not enough money for food?**
3. **Do you or members of your household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there is not enough money for food?**
4. **Do your children ever eat less than you think they should because there is not enough money to buy food?**
5. **Do you ever cut the size of your children's meals or do they ever skip meals because there is not enough money for food?**
6. **Do your children ever say they are hungry because there is not enough food in the house?**
7. **Do you ever rely on a limited number of foods to feed your children because you are running out of money to buy food for a meal?**
8. **Do any of your children ever go to bed hungry because there is not enough money to buy food?**

In addition, after each question the respondent is asked:

___ number of days last month
___ number of days in an average month
___ number of months each year

in which this occurs.

The CCHIP study measures hunger in families based on responses to eight questions. Each family could have a score from 0 to 8. For purposes of our survey, a score of 0 means the family answered none of the eight questions positively, and indicates that the family has no hunger problem. Five or more positive answers indicate a serious food shortage in the household, problems of such magnitude that children are directly affected. The survey categorizes this condition as "severe hunger." Between these two extremes, if there are from one to four positive answers, the family is experiencing food shortage problems and is at risk of developing a severe hunger problem.

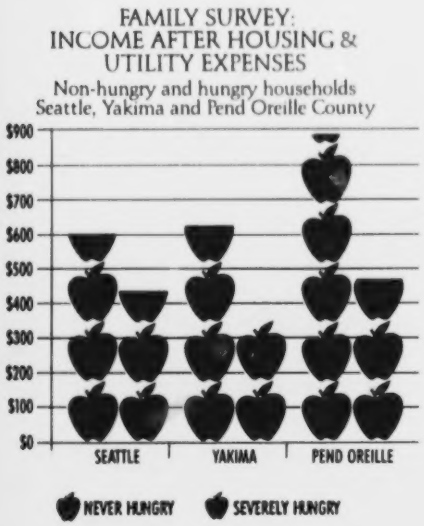
Prevalence of hunger in low-income families with children

Most families interviewed reported food shortages due to lack of resources to buy food. In Seattle and Yakima, 42 percent and 38 percent respectively of families interviewed experienced "severe hunger" as defined by the CCHIP survey. In Pend Oreille County, 21 percent experienced "severe hunger" but an additional 14 percent were "borderline," answering "yes" to four of the hunger questions.

The survey tells us clearly that children in low-income families in Washington State are suffering. In Yakima 17 percent of families interviewed reported that their children go to bed hungry because of lack of resources to obtain food. In Seattle 38 percent of families interviewed said children eat smaller portions than they should or skip meals because the family lacks money to buy food. The problems are even more severe in single-parent households. In Yakima, 50 percent of such households reported hunger.

"For two and a half days in November I had nothing to give them."

—Survey respondent



Hunger and poverty

Some study findings could be anticipated. For instance, there is a direct correlation between hunger and poverty: the lower the income, the higher the prevalence of hunger. Among families with income below the poverty level in all three survey sites, *85 percent had at least one food shortage problem.*

Income after shelter expenses (housing and utilities) is significantly lower for families with severe hunger problems than for those not experiencing hunger. In Seattle, income after shelter expenses averaged only $419 per month for severely hungry families while for non-hungry families it was $586. In Yakima and Pend Oreille the difference was even wider: $328 vs. $599 in Yakima and $453 vs. $868 in Pend Oreille.

Children and health

One of the most chilling study findings concerned the impact of hunger on children's health.

In all sites, children in hungry families were more likely to have specific health problems than children in non-hungry families. Health and school attendance were affected.

In Seattle, Yakima and Pend Oreille County, these children suffered from twice as many specific health problems as children in non-hungry households. In addition, in Pend Oreille County hungry children were more than two times as likely to be absent from school. In Seattle, data also support a strong relationship between hunger and school absences.

Children in Yakima and Seattle whose families ranked high in the hunger scale were likely to suffer from unwanted weight loss, fatigue, headaches and inability to concentrate.

And in Seattle the study documented a higher rate of reported irritability, ear infections, frequent colds and other ailments in children in hungry families. Their parents also reported significantly higher numbers of school absences and frequent visits to the physician.

Not surprisingly, many—from 26 percent to 44 percent in the three sites—of the responding families had no health insurance.

Hunger and employment

The Family Survey linked lack of employment, lack of child care and insufficient wages with hunger problems. It also indicated what these families need to get back on their feet and into the work force.

A job, especially a part-time job, does not necessarily fend off hunger. The Task Force found, for example, that in Seattle and Pend Oreille County, a higher percentage of households with one part-time worker experienced severe hunger than households with no one working.

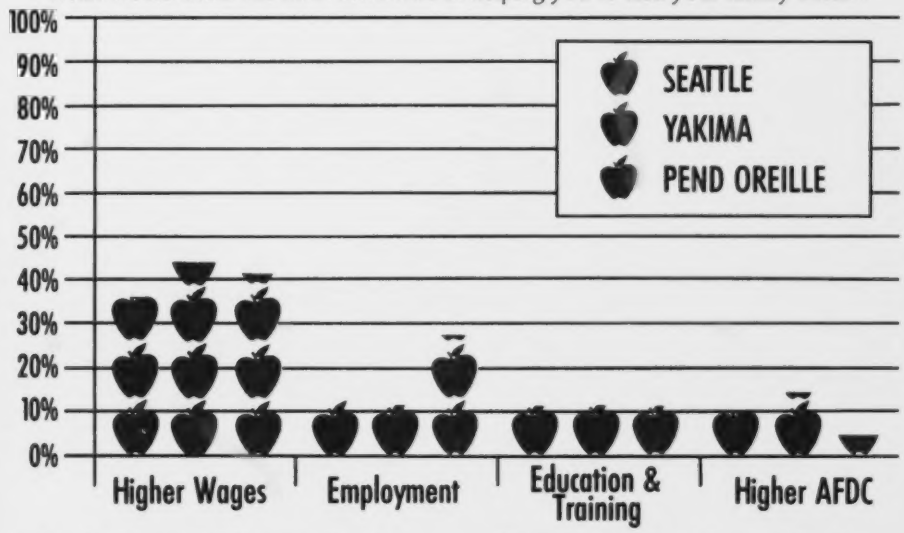
In Yakima seasonal work is a major factor. Of the severely hungry families, 70 percent had a parent who was a seasonal worker, compared with only 38 percent of non-hungry families.

Lack of child care was cited as a barrier to full-time employment for about one-third of the respondents in all three sites. Many respondents also stated that lack of education and training was an additional barrier.

A final question in the survey asked respondents which of a list of options would make the biggest difference in helping them to feed their families better. Higher wages was the number one choice. Employment came second, education and training third. Although a range of 36 to 52 percent of survey respondents at the three sites received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), only 4 to 14 percent stated that higher AFDC payments would

FAMILY SURVEY: TOP RESPONSES IN SEATTLE, YAKIMA AND PEND OREILLE COUNTY TO:

"What would make the most difference in helping you to feed your family better?"



make the biggest difference for the family. Low-income parents in Washington State want to work and increase family income.

Support systems

The survey revealed much about how families deal with hunger. Severely hungry families report using a variety of "survival strategies" such as serving less expensive food, borrowing food or money, and sending children to friends' and relatives' homes to eat.

"We eliminate fresh fruit and vegetables and cut down on milk."

—Survey respondent

In Yakima use of these social supports is particularly high. Hungry families are more than twice as likely to borrow money from friends and relatives to buy food as non-hungry families. One in five severely hungry families sends children to friends or relatives to eat and one in two borrows food.

Hungry families also use food banks, feeding programs and the federal Surplus Commodities Program in their efforts to deal with food shortages. In Seattle 86 percent of severely hungry families use food banks, in Yakima 69 percent and in Pend Oreille County 65 percent. The average number of meals families can make with a food bank bag is two to four.

Public food programs don't help everyone in need. Of surveyed households whose income level made them eligible for the Food Stamp Program, only 54 percent in Yakima were currently receiving food stamps; in Seattle, 78 percent; in Pend Oreille, 64 percent. Families receiving food stamps stated that the stamps lasted only two and a half weeks each month.

Reasons for not using food stamps included confusion about whether the family was eligible, lack of transportation to food stamp offices, and, in Yakima, fear that use of food stamps would prevent families from participating in the amnesty program.

Only 30 percent of potentially eligible families in Pend Oreille County received assistance from the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), though 92 percent of families who did participate felt the program helped them feed their family better. Reasons cited for not being in the program included termination because the child had reached the age of two (although the program was designed to serve at-risk children to age five), and the presence of a waiting list for the program. The percentage of potentially eligible families with preschool children in the survey sites who were served by Head Start ranged from 25 to 45 percent.

"They (WIC program officials) sent me a letter and said because she was over a year old they were taking me off the program."

—Survey respondent

Use of the School Lunch Program, which is offered by school districts in all survey sites, is universally high. But the School Breakfast Program, which could further help hungry children, is often not provided by school districts. In Wapato more than 200 children did not receive school breakfasts because the Wapato School District did not provide the program. However, the School Board recently decided to offer it in September 1988, after hearing from teachers that only five out of 20 students receive breakfast at home before school. In all sites, parents spoke of children unable to take advantage of school breakfasts because buses arrived too late.

The survey tells us that many families eligible for help do not receive it, and even when low-

income families access food programs and obtain all assistance available in their communities, they still may not get sufficient food. The nature of the barriers to their getting more help will be discussed in Chapter 4.

"I had three apples one day. The next day I let the kids eat the lettuce."

—Survey respondent

Hunger among seniors

The Task Force recognized another group "at risk" in Washington State: our over-60 population. Senior citizens, particularly those living below the federal poverty level and those dependent on community assistance programs, were the second survey target group.

The Senior Survey looked at major elements that are an index to nutritional risk: food consumption; diversity of foods eaten; ability to shop and to prepare and store food; income; and social and physical isolation.

Senior Survey Nutritional Risk Factors

- **Did not always have enough money to buy needed food**
- **Stove and/or refrigerator did not work**
- **Consumed less than five different kinds of foods the day before**
- **Ate less than three meals a day**
- **Had been without food for three days in a row in the last month**
- **Lost weight in the last month without trying**
- **Had no one to come in and help when sick in bed**
- **Lived alone**
- **Had illness or condition that interfered with eating**
- **Could not shop for or prepare own foods**
- **Did not feel like eating anything at all at least once a month or more**

Survey methodology

The research tool used was again one that had been tested nationally by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). It was a short, self-administered questionnaire evaluating the presence of nutritional risk factors in seniors participating in congregate (group) and home-delivered meal programs.

Those who answered "yes" to five or more questions out of the 12 were considered at risk.

Interest in the study was high. In September 1987 when the Task Force presented findings of a three-county pilot survey at a statewide senior nutrition meeting, 12 additional counties signed up to participate. Also, the Small Tribes of Western Washington organization distributed the survey through member tribes.

Urban counties included in the survey were Spokane, Benton, Yakima, Snohomish and Pierce; rural counties, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Franklin, Okanogan, Grant, Kittitas, Chelan, Douglas and Adams.

Average age of seniors surveyed was 77. Of these, 66 percent were female. Almost one-third had income below the federal poverty level, which is $5,265 for one person and $6,628 for a two-person household.

Some of the findings were startling.

Evidence of hunger

On the 12-point nutritional risk scale, 26 percent of the seniors scored five or above, indicating they were at risk. Of seniors with income below the federal poverty level, 41 percent were at risk.

Hunger was apparent, particularly among those with income below the poverty level: 13 percent surveyed said they had gone without food at least one day in the past month. An average of 5 percent were without food for three or more days.

Over one-half of those surveyed said they did not always have enough money to buy needed food.

Responses identified dependence on the Senior Nutrition Program; 19 percent said it saved them from going without food for one or more days a month.

Many respondents were isolated. Over one-half (56 percent) lived alone.

Use of programs

Only 10 percent of seniors reported using food banks. In rural areas this rate was even lower, 7 percent. However, seniors with income below the poverty level were more likely to access food banks; 20 percent in urban areas and 13 percent in rural areas.

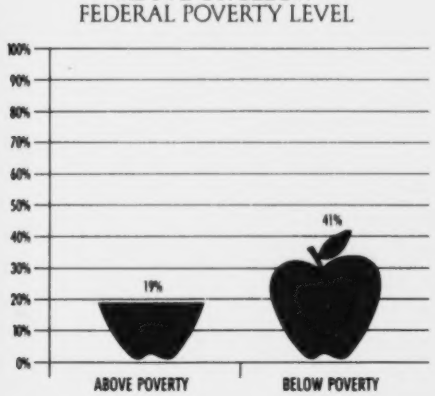
The federal Surplus Commodities Program is often a source of supplemental food for seniors; 44 percent of respondents stated they used the program. It is, however, scheduled to end this year.

The Food Stamp Program was underutilized, serving only 11 percent of the seniors surveyed, and only 27 percent of seniors with income below the federal poverty level. (Income eligibility for food stamps is 130 percent of the federal poverty level.) Participation of seniors with income below the poverty level varied with region: 32 percent urban participation compared with 18 percent in rural areas.

The average amount of food stamps received by seniors was $25 a month, or 28 cents a meal for a one-person household and 14 cents a meal for a two-person household.

Contributing factors to non-participation by seniors below the poverty level included: "I don't believe I am eligible"—31 percent; "I don't know about the program"—15 percent; "No transportation"—20 percent; "Too embarrassed to use them"—9 percent; and "Don't like welfare"—14 percent.

SENIOR SURVEY:
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS AT NUTRITIONAL RISK BY INCOME ABOVE OR BELOW FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL



How many are hungry?

Moving the Task Force study a step further suggests that the findings could be merely the tip of the hunger iceberg. A 1986 estimate placed the state's population at 4.8 million people, with about 12 percent living below the poverty level. Using these figures, it can be assumed that about 547,000 Washington State residents live in poverty and about one-half of these live in families with children.

Applying the study's findings, it can be concluded that 232,800 state residents with incomes below the poverty level who live in families with children are suffering from hunger and/or food shortage problems. This estimate does not include the other 50 percent of the state population who are *not* members of families with children, and those with income just above the poverty level who may also experience food shortages.

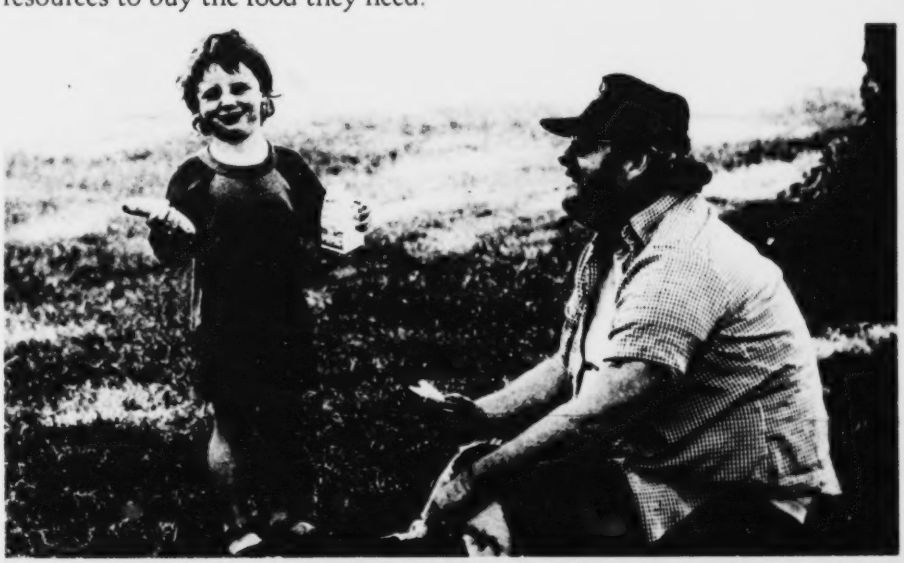
Conclusion

The evidence is clear and disturbing: hunger is prevalent in Washington State. A large percentage of low-income families surveyed by the Task Force lacked resources to buy the food they need. Many state residents must skip meals. Perhaps most visibly affected are the children of low-income families. Their health, school attendance and general development suffer.

Other affected groups, as shown in the surveys, are seasonal farm workers, low-income seniors and the working poor. Many of these people are unaware of the food benefits available to them. Fear, embarrassment, and lack of transportation also separate many from the benefits they need.

Beyond offering statistical support for the existence of hunger per se, the surveys also yield reliable data needed to devise realistic solutions to the hunger problem, such as the actual relationship between lack of income and hunger, the prevalence of hunger in single-headed households and in those where a seasonal worker contributes to household income, and the use of the various support systems as well as reasons for non-use.

The findings provide a solid basis for the Task Force recommendations for action, and add an important dimension to the examination of the causes of hunger in Chapter 3.



3. WHY HUNGER EXISTS

We have seen that hunger is a severe problem in Washington State. Yet until we fully understand the reasons so many in our state are hungry, we cannot begin to arrive at realistic, long-term solutions.

Determination of the underlying causes of hunger was central to the research by the Governor's Task Force on Hunger. What factors cause more and more Washington residents to sink into poverty and its accompanying hunger? Can trends be identified that make hunger today different from the 1960s and 1970s? Understanding and documenting these factors and trends will help us recommend new responses to the hunger problems in our state.

Hunger: definition and major causes

As stated earlier, the Task Force defined hunger as "the inability to obtain the needed quantity and/or quality of food because of a lack of resources." Task Force research proved that those living in poverty are most likely to lack the resources to obtain food. Therefore, hunger and poverty had to be looked at simultaneously, as answers were sought to these main questions:

1. What contributes to lack of resources, i.e., to poverty?
2. What changes in our economy and our society are affecting present hunger levels—and will affect hunger in the future?

After an initial meeting with service providers, policy analysts and advocates, the Task Force agreed to focus its research on these major causes of hunger:

Lack of jobs

Low wages

Rising cost of housing and other fixed expenses

Inadequate basic services

Education systems struggling to adapt to change

Changing family structure

All these factors are an outgrowth of the nature of, and trends in, our state and nation at this moment in history. Finding solutions to the problems of Washington's low-income residents will need to be accompanied by changes in the way we see the future of our state as a whole.

The complete Task Force report on this research, as well as sources for data in this chapter, will be found in the Appendix, "Major Causes of Hunger in Washington State," available from the Task Force.

Jobs and wages

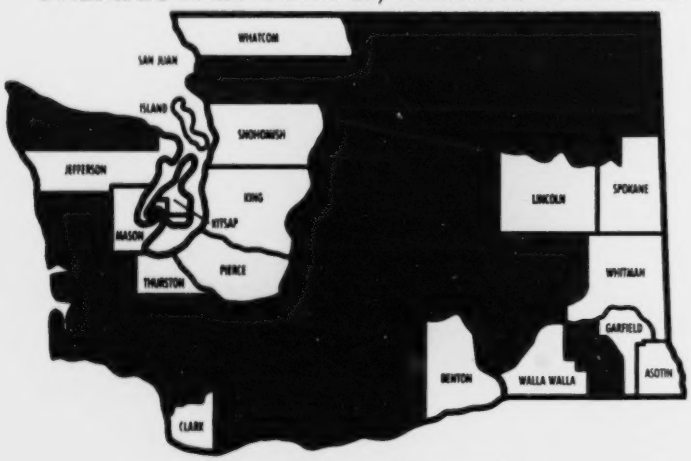
The Task Force asked first: how do lack of jobs and low wages contribute to the hunger problem?

Unemployment and underemployment

The state's major employers—forest products, aerospace, shipbuilding, metals and agriculture—are heavily influenced by national and international policy. In some instances we lack local control over the economy of our state. When these industries suffer downturns, the impact on employment can be drastic.

The recession that occurred during the first half of this decade lasted longer, and was more severe, in Washington State than in the nation as a whole. The state lost an estimated 44,000 to 55,000 jobs a year between 1979 and 1985. Workers have continued to suffer from high levels of unemployment.

COUNTIES WITH UNEMPLOYMENT GREATER THAN 120% OF STATE AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT 1986-88, WASHINGTON STATE



Source: "Distressed Counties," Washington State Employment Security Dept., Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch, March 1988.

Even though the state's unemployment rate is declining, it is still over 6 percent and continues to be higher than the national average.

For minorities in the state, the unemployment rates are even worse. The 1986 rate for Hispanics was 12.2 percent, for blacks 12.7 percent, and for Native Americans 18 percent. Certain areas are harder hit than others. In Skamania County, unemployment was 19.2 percent in 1986; in Columbia County, 18.7 percent.

Alarming as these figures are, the state's official unemployment rate actually understates the extent of the problem. The official rate does not include "discouraged" workers who have given up looking for jobs; others who could find only part-time work; and the unemployed in agriculture and other "noncovered" industries.

Furthermore, current disruptions in the economy—factory closings, decline of basic industries, rising importance of service and retail sectors—have serious effects on income. When experienced workers who have been laid off find jobs in different industries, they suffer an average 28 percent cut in pay.

"If I could get a job that would allow me to work with my back injury, I would start tomorrow."

—Survey respondent

The wage decline

Changes in the Washington economy have resulted in fewer high-paying, unionized jobs. Most new jobs being created are lower-paying, in service and retail trade. Between 1978 and 1985, 75 percent of the new jobs in the state were in these sectors, and the Employment Security Department expects that trend to continue. These jobs pay about half the wages of the manufacturing jobs they are replacing.

Here again, the trend in Washington State is more discouraging than in the nation as a whole. Our wages in service industries have declined nearly 10 percent in real terms since 1981, while the national average has risen by 6 percent. The Task Force found that wages are actually declining most in those sectors of the economy that are growing most rapidly and that already are the lowest-paying.

Low minimum wage levels are another factor affecting the resources that families have available for food. The federal minimum wage ($3.35 an hour) has not been raised since 1981; the state's ($2.30), not since 1976. Though only seven years ago it was possible for a fulltime worker earning the federal minimum wage to support a family of three at, or slightly above, the poverty level, today that wage earner's income is $2,496 below the poverty level.

Seasonal workers and women in the labor force

The Task Force identified families of seasonal workers as a group experiencing severe hunger problems. Such workers—in agriculture, construction, fisheries and forestry—are at the mercy of seasonal employment patterns, which may not yield sufficient income for the worker to support a family year-round. And this is a sizeable part of the state's labor force: some 18 percent in 1986.

Women constitute another large segment of the state's workers. It is well documented that, nationally,

women still earn less than comparably trained men, and Washington is no exception. But aside from that, most working women here are employed in the lowest-paying occupations: administrative, support and service jobs. The Task Force survey of families found that most working women surveyed made less than other contributing adults in the family. In Pend Oreille County, the average hourly wage of survey respondents (93 percent were female) was 57 percent of the average wage made by other contributing adults in survey households.

The phenomenon of the "working poor"

The Task Force found in the Family Survey that in some areas a higher percentage of households with one person working part-time experienced severe hunger than the percentage of households with no one working. Many other households with one or two persons working still experienced severe hunger.

The explanation is in the overall decline in wages: because of the large numbers of underemployed, part-time, seasonal and minimum-wage workers, more people are working for less. Also, these part-time and low-wage workers have limited benefits, which means even more demands on their income available for food. Thus, the Task Force concluded, it is getting increasingly difficult to obtain employment that will keep an individual or family above the poverty level.

This is one more symptom of the new economic truth: a job is not a guarantee of adequate resources.

Growing disparity between income and wealth

Washington State is in line with the national pattern: wage and salary income is declining, income from financial assets increasing. The former has gone down in our state by over 10 percent, after adjusting for inflation, since 1979, while the latter grew at a rate of 8 percent a year from 1980 to 1984. Nationally, the top one percent of Americans possess more net wealth than the bottom 90 percent. As the gap widens between those whose resources depend on assets and those dependent on wages, families who are poor are falling even deeper into poverty.

Effects of the tax structure

A similar disparity to that seen in distribution of income and wealth is evident in the unequal tax burden in the state. Poor families pay three times as much of their annual income in state taxes as do the wealthiest families—6 percent vs. 2 percent.

Small businesses—currently creating most new jobs in the state—also pay a heavy burden. The Business and Occupation tax is imposed on gross receipts rather than on net income; and new businesses, with very limited incomes, find the tax a deterrent to growth if not survival.

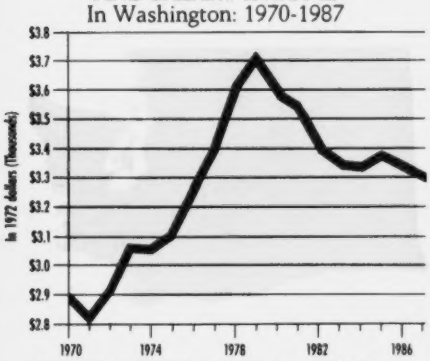
There is another income gap within our state, a geographic one. Average income in the central Puget Sound area is 15 percent above the U.S. average, and $3,000 above that of the rest of the state. Outside the Puget Sound region personal income is below the national average and heading even lower.

Pressures on income due to rising expenses

Costs of housing, medical care, insurance, utilities and other essentials continue to rise. In low-income families, these needs may take precedence in deciding how scarce resources are to be spent. Result: less, and less nutritious,

food on the table. Seniors on fixed incomes are particularly vulnerable.

PER CAPITA WAGE
AND SALARY INCOME
In Washington: 1970-1987



Inflation Adjusted (1972 $) Wage and Salary

Total wages and salaries
divided by state population.
Source: Washington Economic Revenue
and Forecast Council.

Housing

Lack of housing — homelessness — is the most vivid and visible symptom of poverty, especially in cities. The sight of the homeless sleeping in the street next to costly high-rise buildings is distressingly frequent. Our state is no exception to the national pattern of inordinately high housing costs: the Census Bureau reports that the majority of renters with incomes below $7,000 spent 60 percent of their income on rent and utilities in 1983.

Even if they could afford low-cost housing, many families cannot find it. In Seattle, 15,000 low-cost housing units have been lost since the 1960s; and urban neighborhoods are being rebuilt for higher-income residents. This forces low-income residents to move, often to suburbs far from jobs—or to depend on shelters. In Seattle, 30 percent of shelter residents are working people who cannot afford housing.

Meantime, federal funding for subsidized housing fell from $30 billion in 1981 to less than $8 billion in 1988.

Utilities costs

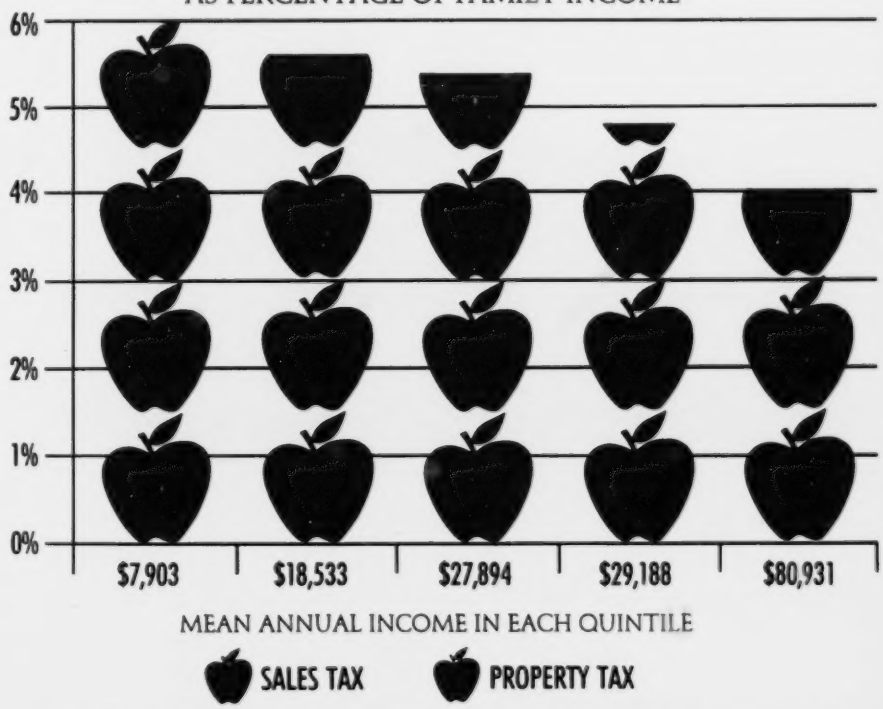
Rising utilities costs have also increased housing expenses, and have meant less money for food. Between 1980 and 1986, the amount of money spent per capita on residential energy costs in our state increased by over 50 percent. Low-income households have been most affected. In 1986, the average household nationwide spent just 4 percent of its income on home energy costs, while the average low-income household spent 15 percent.

In 1987, Washington State's share of the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program appropriation equalled only 34 percent of estimated total heating and cooling costs of all potentially eligible low-income households in the state. This percentage is expected to be even lower in 1988, since federal funding for the program has been cut still more.

Medical and insurance costs

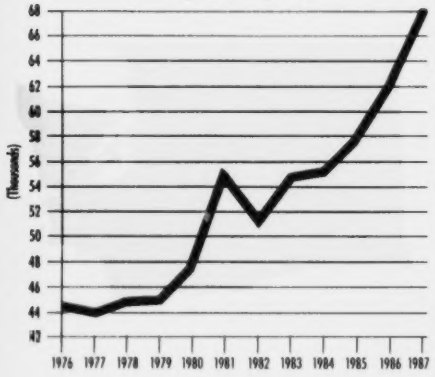
Still more pressure on income comes from rising medical costs: up 50 percent between 1980 and 1985. Yet few of those who would be hardest hit by a medical emergency have insurance. Either their employers do not offer it, or as part-time workers they are not eligible, or they are unemployed. The Task Force survey found that the proportion of families reporting that they had Medicaid or other insurance came to 66 percent in Seattle, 74 percent in Pend Oreille County, and only 54 percent in Yakima. The new State Basic Health Plan may extend coverage to some of these families, but its resources and availability are limited.

WASHINGTON STATE TAXES 1985
AS PERCENTAGE OF FAMILY INCOME

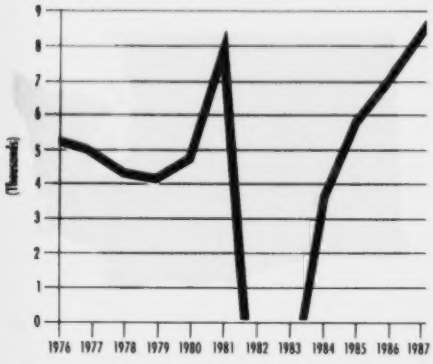


Source: "Citizens for Tax Justice, The Sorry State of State Taxes," January 1987.

AFDC-R CASELOADS
Single-Parent
(January of each year)

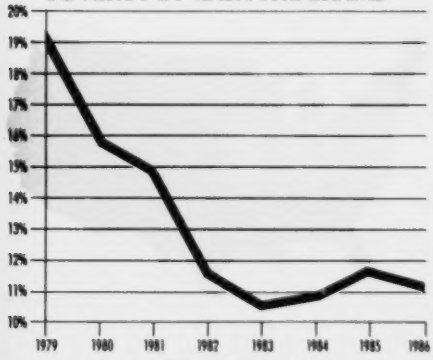


AFDC CASELOADS
2-Parent
(January of each year)



Note: Program eliminated July, 1981 to June, 1983

PERCENTAGE OF POOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN LIFTED FROM POVERTY BY CASH PROGRAMS



Source: Census Bureau data,
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1987

Inadequacy of basic services

The drastic cuts of 1981-1983 in federal programs for low-income families and individuals are now recognized by researchers as a major factor in the increase in poverty. State programs, too, have been cut sharply. Full accounts of the effects of these reductions will be found in the Appendix, but a few examples follow.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children: not enough

This largest of all federal programs for children, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), dates from 1935, and was one of those severely affected by budget cuts. In our state, despite the overall economic recovery, an increasing number of families, both single- and two-parent, need this assistance. The caseload increase has been highest outside metropolitan areas.

AFDC benefits are not indexed to inflation. This, combined with funding cuts, has reduced grants to levels far below the poverty level. A family of three receives benefits at 65 percent of the poverty level; when food stamps are added, benefits are still only 85 percent of the poverty level.

To compound the problem, it is hard for recipients to break out of the system and take the first steps to self-sufficiency. Any income means an almost equal deduction from benefits, as well as loss of medical and child care and fewer education and training opportunities. The Family Independence Program (FIP), which began operation July 1, 1988, seeks to address these disincentives, but a major barrier to the program's success may be the lack of jobs in our state that pay a living wage.

"I want work that will give me enough money to live decently. But even if I take a low-paying job, my benefits will be cut and I'll be worse off."

—Survey respondent

Unemployment insurance falls short of need

Only 37 percent of the state's unemployed received benefits in an average month in 1986. The program is not reaching many of those who need it most. They may not qualify because of not having worked long enough or continuously enough at their last job; they may be in agriculture or other noncovered occupations; or they may have held such a low-paying job that benefits are also low. Those least likely to receive benefits are jobless young adults, women and minorities. People in our state who do not have children or a disability and do not qualify for unemployment insurance are not covered by *any* form of income assistance.

The at-risk and ineligible

All state and federal programs for the disabled, elderly and unemployable provide assistance below the poverty level: for example, a single disabled person (one who will be unable to work for at least 60 days) receives a monthly grant of $314—that is, 68 percent of the poverty level. Many people in our state are completely without assistance. With tightened budgets and eligibility requirements, they were "pushed out of the safety

net." Victims of longterm or catastrophic illness fall in this category. Many others, such as the high-risk elderly, are unaware of available programs, or reluctant to use them, or unable to get to them. Without outreach to find and help them, these people are vulnerable to hunger due to lack of resources.

Education and training, and their effect on poverty

Lack of income, lack of employment, inequities in the tax structure and inadequate basic services all contribute to poverty and hunger. So do shortcomings of the education system, which deter low-income and minority students from reaching their full earning potential.

Poor youth, regardless of race, are three to four times more likely to drop out of school than affluent youth. Lacking a high school diploma, they find it harder to get jobs, especially adequately-paying jobs. (Droputs earn three-quarters as much as high school graduates, and one-half as much as college graduates.) This is a real problem in Washington State, where a recent study showed a 25 percent dropout rate for high school students.

And even those children from families living in poverty who do stay in school may not to acquire the skills they need to get and hold a job: a national survey shows that half of poor children are in the lowest one-fifth in basic reading and math skills. Thus, they are handicapped in the job market, especially today when unemployed skilled workers are competing with them for entry-level jobs. Employers are more and more frustrated with the lack of basic skills—including vocational—of job applicants. This points to the need for greater effort to provide school training that matches today's job opportunities.

A self-perpetuating threat

The long-term effects of these trends are alarming. Students who drop out and fail to acquire basic skills are likely to live in poverty during their own lives, and to pass on the condition to the next generation. The National Longitudinal Survey of Young Americans showed that those with lowest math and reading skills were most likely to bear children out of wedlock, to drop out of school, to fail to find work, and to turn to public assistance for support.

Families facing these bleak prospects are aware of the need for remedies: large percentages of those surveyed by the Task Force said lack of education and training barred them from fulltime employment. At the same time, federal funding for job training has been reduced by 81 percent.

Preschool programs, which help children to take the first steps toward educational achievement and adult self-sufficiency, are unavailable to many low-income families. Washington State has created the Early Childhood Education Program (ECEAP) to supplement the Head Start preschool program. However, even with this state commitment, fewer than 30 percent of children potentially eligible for Head Start and ECEAP receive the service.

Effects of changing family structures

Dramatic changes in family structure are linked to the increase in poverty, with women and children bearing the brunt: three-quarters of the poor people in the country are now women and children.

As single-parent households increase, and as more and more families are headed by single females, women are more and more responsible for supporting themselves and their children. Yet their wages average 64 percent of men's; and this is likely to get worse because most women's jobs are in service and retail trade, where wages are declining.

Nor can women raising children alone expect much help from child support. Even when a divorced woman is awarded child support—and often she is not—that does not mean she receives it. Out of 309 single female-headed households surveyed in all sites, only 26 reported receiving child support.

More women working, less child care

In two-parent families, it has become the norm for both parents to work to keep up with rising household costs. In Washington, 60 percent of mothers of preschool and school-age children are working. Demand for relatively scarce child-care assistance is skyrocketing. One-third of Family Survey respondents in all sites stated that lack of child care was a barrier to their working fulltime. This has become one of the most serious deterrents to overcoming poverty.

In single-parent families, the problem is at its worst. Even when she can find somebody to care for the children, the single mother may have to pay nearly half her real disposable income for child care. Among single-parent households interviewed in Seattle and Yakima, 46 percent and 52 percent respectively experienced severe food shortages, affecting children in the household.

"I need to be able to work fulltime but I can't because there is no one to take care of the kids before and after school. It's scary to leave the kids alone in this neighborhood."

—Survey respondent

Conclusion

Despite the official indicators of the national economic health and growth, hunger persists to an alarming degree in Washington State. Many factors contribute to this situation: lack of income, scarcity of jobs, pressures of fixed costs, lack of education and training, and changes in family structure, which may require female heads of household to bear heavy economic burdens.

Recognizing the existence and causes of these factors has to precede the formulation of reasonable solutions to the poverty problem. So does an awakening of concern about the welfare of our fellow-citizens. Ultimately, the future of the state and the future of its citizens living in poverty cannot be separated, just as solutions to the problem of hunger will benefit us all as a community.

One major factor, the effectiveness of basic services and systems designed to alleviate hunger and poverty, was touched on in this chapter. In the next chapter, we will examine these systems in more detail, in order to provide as broad a base of fact as possible for recommendations for reducing hunger in Washington State.

Carnation
2%
LOWFAT MILK

4. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

Having established that hunger is a serious problem in Washington State, and examined the causes, the Task Force next addressed these questions: What food assistance programs are available in the state, and how effective are they? Could they be even more effective?

Among the findings: Food assistance programs are inadequate to meet the needs of the hungry. Some do not offer enough help, others cannot serve all the people who qualify and need assistance. In some instances the resources for public programs are available but not fully utilized.

Inadequate funding is a primary barrier to program effectiveness. But the vital link of communication is also missing in our state. Thousands of people who might receive food stamp benefits are not aware of the program or feel they are not eligible. Others are defeated by the sheer complexity of applying.

Why are these programs not meeting the need? The Task Force sought answers, in order to recommend steps to deal with the state's hunger problem.

Task Force research

The Task Force looked at the state's public and private non-profit food assistance programs to see if they operated as a system of services designed to best meet the needs of hungry people. The key tool was a survey of public and private agencies providing assistance. Of 429 agencies approached, 273 responded with information on people served, sources of food and funding, relationships with other agencies, and needs and ideas for making their services work better. Results of the survey and a more detailed description of the services available in the state are included in the Appendix, "Food Assistance in Washington State," available from the Task Force.

In addition, Task Force staff talked with state-level and local service providers, provider organizations, advocates and service consumers. These groups were helpful in determining the level to which food programs met basic hunger needs for children, adults, the elderly, minority individuals and others in the state.

Throughout this report, programs are referred to as public or private. Public programs are financed through public dollars and regulated by federal or state legislation. They may be operated by state agencies or through private non-profit agencies.

Private programs like food banks and various church and mission feeding programs are funded primarily through private resources. A non-profit agency might operate both private and public food programs. Figure 1 shows organization of the state's food programs.

Public food assistance programs

The following sections describe the major public food programs operating in Washington State.

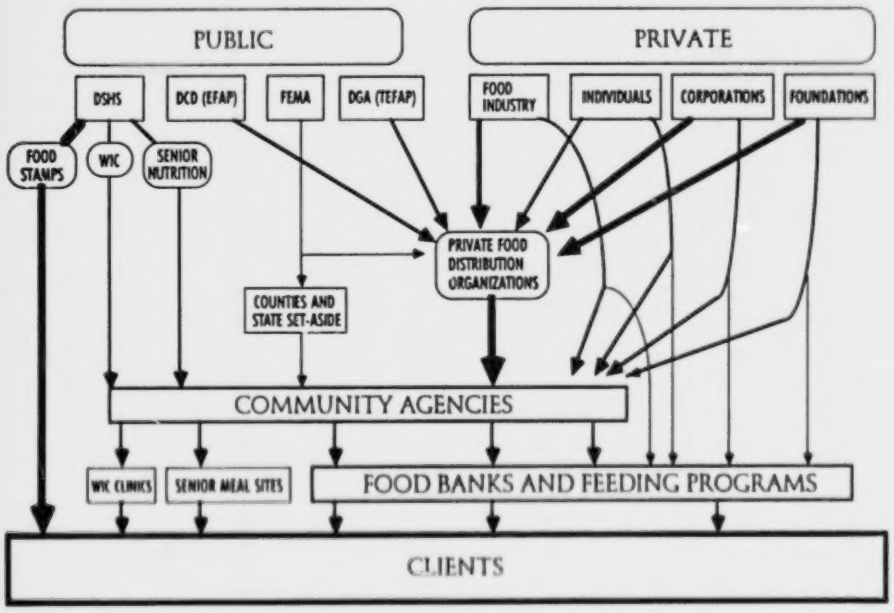
1. Food Stamp Program

ELIGIBILITY, BENEFITS AND OPERATION IN THE STATE

Figure 1

FOOD ASSISTANCE SYSTEM :

FLOW OF FOOD AND FUNDS IN WASHINGTON STATE



The federal Food Stamp Program is the nation's first line of defense against hunger, the most heavily funded program, and the one program open to all who meet income eligibility requirements. To receive food stamps, a family must have income below 130 percent of the federal poverty level—that is, income of $14,569 or less for a family of four—and must not have assets in excess of program limits.

In March 1988, about 7 percent of the state's population, or 319,256 people, received food stamps with benefits totaling $15 million. Each individual received an average of $47.44 in food stamps or 53 cents per meal.

Food stamps are administered by the state's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) through 39 Community Services Offices (CSOs) in the state. Recipients with no income receive maximum food stamp benefits. For each dollar of income reported, 30 cents is subtracted from the food stamp amount. The program's primary funding is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVENESS

The Task Force identified the following areas as those where the Food Stamp Program could and should be more effective.

Benefits delivered: Overwhelming evidence indicates that benefits are not sufficient to provide families and individuals with adequate food and nutrition. The program was planned to be supplemental, but many families are unable to add to their food stamps. Instead, they depend on food banks and their own survival strategies, or exist on an inadequate diet. Surveys in 1987 showed that 63 percent of Spokane food bank clients and 46 percent of those in Seattle also received food stamps.

Families interviewed by the Task Force in Yakima, Seattle and Pend Oreille County said their food stamps lasted only 2.5 to 2.7 weeks out of each month. Seniors participating in the Task Force Senior Survey reported that on the average they received $25.21 in food stamps each month, an amount equaling 28 cents a meal for a one-person household and 14 cents a meal for a two-person household.

Food stamp benefits are based on the Thrifty Food Plan, considered by the USDA to provide adequate nutrition over the short term for an average family. Unfortunately, many must rely on food stamps for long periods, and have limited ability to add money to food stamps for food purchases. The consequence for families in our state is hunger.

"Food stamps are never enough."

—Survey respondent

Income and assets requirements: A number of provisions are in place that make qualifying for food stamps difficult. Food stamp recipients must "spend down" their liquid assets to qualify. Value of automobiles owned, for instance, must not exceed $4,500, an amount set in 1977. Particularly hard hit by this provision are the working poor, people seeking work, and rural families who often require two cars.

Prior to a recent regulation change, families were required to have a permanent address to receive food stamps. Consequently, homeless families were left out. The new regulation permits families living in shelters to receive food stamps—but the regulation is only temporary.

Other provisions reduce the food stamps received. For example, in the case of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) which is distributed in the state through the DSHS Family Independence Program (FIP), all but $50 of child support received is subtracted from

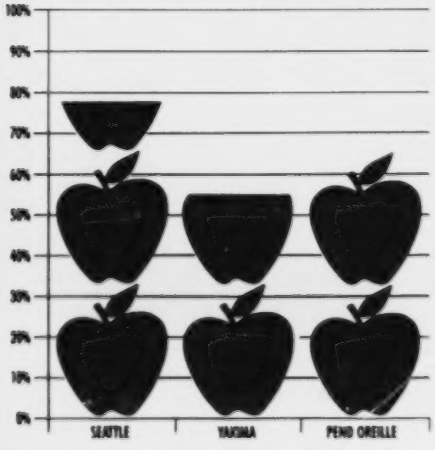
the AFDC grant. Then the remaining $50 is counted as income by the Food Stamp Program. These provisions add to an already built-in disincentive to pay child support. The net result is less food on the table for children in single-parent households.

Households receiving food stamps where there is earned income must report monthly the amount of income received. Food stamps received *two months later* are adjusted downward by the income earned. Because of the rise in part-time employment, layoffs, and the major role that seasonal work plays in Washington State, families often do not know how many food stamps they will receive from month to month.

The Task Force found that low-income families in Yakima and Wapato, areas characterized by seasonal employment, are less likely to receive food stamps than their counterparts in Seattle.

FAMILY SURVEY: PERCENTAGE OF INCOME-ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FOOD STAMPS

Seattle, Yakima and Pend Oreille County



Outreach and access: Although poverty has increased in the 1980s, use of the Food Stamp Program has not kept pace. The ratio of people receiving food stamps to the number with income below the poverty level in the state has decreased from 65 percent in 1980 to 58 percent in 1988. Problems with information and access contribute to this decrease.

Federal funding for food stamp outreach, information and nutritional education ended in 1981. Although the Food Stamp Program has been in place since the sixties, 15 percent of seniors with income below the poverty level completing the Task Force Senior Survey had not heard of the program. Among those who are aware of it, misinformation abounds concerning eligibility. Many respondents to the Family Survey thought they could not apply if they were working, even though their family income was still far below food stamp eligibility requirements.

Only limited help is provided by caseworkers in CSOs to applicants. Federal limits on the errors permitted in administering the program before the state is penalized are low (5 percent). The result is huge paperwork requirements at the line staff level. An adversarial atmosphere is established as caseworkers are forced to think paperwork first, clients second. Respondents to the Family Survey indicated that demeaning treatment by food stamp staff sometimes kept them from applying for needed assistance.

Applications for non-Family Independence Program (FIP) clients applying for food stamps are 16 pages long and require exhaustive documentation. An advocate showed the Task Force a printed form—in English—which applicants were supposed to read and complete if they needed a language interpreter.

In rural areas particularly, transportation and distance play a role in low use of food stamps. CSOs may be located 30 to 50 miles away from some rural residents. Twenty-one percent of rural seniors not currently receiving food stamps who responded to the Senior Survey stated they had no transportation to get to the CSO to apply.

For working families qualifying for food stamps, reaching the CSO during office hours is a problem.

"I couldn't take time off from work to go apply."

—Survey respondent

Nutrition education is no longer provided to food stamp recipients, although the educational component of the WIC program is often heralded as one of its more crucial elements.

"I took extension classes on making my own food and stretching foods. It helps out a lot. Newport needs something like that for other people who get food stamps."

—Survey respondent

Expedited issuance: Delays in receiving food stamps often drive hungry families to food banks. A 1987 survey of Spokane-area food bank users found that 13 percent were waiting to hear from the CSO about their food stamp application. Often, families do not apply for food stamps until they are desperate and some do not understand that the usual waiting period for stamps is 30 days.

Expedited issuance of food stamps is permitted for applicants with less than $150 in income and $100 in assets; stamps must be received by qualifying applicants within five days. DSHS indicated that 26 percent of food stamp applicants from July 1987 to January 1988 applied for expedited service. However, data was not available on how many actually received the service.

In Texas, a 1986 state law requires that expedited food stamps be provided to qualifying families within one day. Currently, 50 percent of applicants there use this service. Food banks in Texas report that the new law has eased part of their burden by providing another emergency alternative for hungry people. New York, California and Minnesota have also adopted laws reducing the waiting period for expedited issuance.

Family Independence Program: FIP has made great strides in streamlining paperwork for FIP clients applying for food stamps. FIP "cashes out" food stamps for its clients, giving them a combined benefit check that includes the old AFDC grant and a cash amount equal to their food stamp benefits. Concern has been expressed about the impact of this cash-out on the amount of funds families will have to spend on food. The base AFDC grant is currently far below the poverty level and it must be stretched to cover all basic needs. With food stamps, money for food was protected; with FIP it is not.

2. Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

ELIGIBILITY, BENEFITS AND OPERATION IN THE STATE

The WIC program is targeted to pregnant and lactating women, infants, and children up to the age

of five. WIC has been proven effective in decreasing health risks of target clients including fetal mortality, low-birthweight babies and preterm deliveries. A Harvard University study found that a $1 investment in the prenatal component of WIC resulted in a $3 saving in hospital care for low-birthweight babies.

Beyond its immediate impact on the health of participants, WIC has served as a gateway for low-income women and children to other health-care services, including prenatal care.

To be eligible for WIC, family income must be less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level, or $16,218 for a family of three, and nutritional risk must be determined.

Recipients of WIC receive a monthly food package tailored to the dietary needs of the woman, infant or child. Participants must attend educational sessions every six months. WIC families interviewed by the Task Force overwhelmingly felt that WIC promotes better overall nutrition in their households.

"Getting WIC vouchers has made things a lot better for us."

—Survey respondent

BARRIERS TO WIC EFFECTIVENESS

Funding: It is clear that WIC is a proven and effective tool. However, inadequate federal funding decreases assistance to eligible mothers and children. Nationally, only 40 percent of those eligible are served. In Washington State the level of service is even lower, only 32.7 percent in June 1988.

Because of limited funding, WIC programs across the state must limit service to eligible children. Children over four were served in only nine counties in December 1987. In some cases, children as young as 18 months are dropped from the program, even though they are still at nutritional risk.

State funds have been allocated to assist the state WIC program to use all available federal funds. However, even when all available dollars are used, many eligible women, infants and children are still not served.

Formula costs: The WIC program is the largest purchaser of formula nationally. Negotiating single-source contracts for formula purchase has saved other states millions. It is estimated that Washington State could save from $3 million to $6 million if a single-source contract were developed through a competitive bidding process. New federal regulations allow states to use cost savings to

WIC
Counties Where Less Than 30% Potentially Eligible are Served

Source: DSHS, WIC Program, 1988

serve additional clients. In Oregon, cost savings of $1.8 million per year resulted in the ability to serve 3,600 more clients.

Coordination: A major benefit of WIC is its role as a point of entry into prenatal care for low-income women. Recent changes in federal regulation of the Medicaid "Medically Needy Program" open the door for more women and young children to receive medical assistance. WIC is a logical entry point for these families, but no formal mechanisms exist in DSHS to coordinate WIC and Medicaid.

3. Child Nutrition Programs: School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

ELIGIBILITY, BENEFITS AND OPERATION IN THE STATE

The National School Lunch Program began in 1946, as a "measure of national security to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the nation's children." In 1970 Congress made meals available on a free or reduced-price basis to low-income children. School breakfast was added in 1975. Recent legislation also allows participation by private schools. Funds come primarily from the federal government, with the state paying 30 percent of the costs for basic meals. Additional federal reimbursement for free and reduced-price meals does not require a state match.

In 1986-87, 54 million school lunches and 3 million breakfasts were served in Washington State. Of these, 43 percent of the lunches and 86 percent of the breakfasts were served to children eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Eligible families must have income less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level for free meals, and less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level for reduced-price meals.

USDA requires that the meals provided meet nutritional standards. Studies have shown that low-income children receive from 1/3 to 1/2 of their daily nutrient intake from the school lunch.

"Weekends are the toughest."

—Survey respondent

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAMS

Availability of the programs: Eighty-five percent of school districts in the state participate in the National School Lunch Program, but only 21 percent provide school breakfast in at least one school. This means that in 44 districts children do not have access to school lunch and in 224 districts breakfast is not available.

The Task Force Family Survey found that the primary reason low-income children did not receive school breakfasts was that it was not offered. Small size of the school district does not prohibit participation in either program; the Task Force found that 82 districts with total enrollment below 500 participated in the lunch program.

"The school lunch program really helps."

— Survey respondent

The percentage of children receiving reduced-price meals has declined significantly since 1981, when the price was raised to a maximum of 40 cents. The program still saves families about 60 cents per meal over full-price meals. Federal reimbursement of reduced-price meals is also significantly higher than for full-price meals.

In Maryland participation in the reduced-price programs increased 80 percent (lunch) and 167 percent (breakfast), after 1987 legislation that reduced cost to the family to 20 cents for lunch and 10 cents for breakfast.

Child Nutrition Programs: Child Care and Summer Feeding Programs

Two additional programs available through USDA for children are the Child Care Food Program (CCFP) and the Summer Feeding Program. The CCFP helps day care centers and homes to provide meals to children. The Summer Feeding Program offers meals to children in low-income areas during the summer—a period when food banks say demand for their services increases because children are not receiving school meals.

Children up to 12 may receive assistance if their day care program is licensed and applies for help. Agencies providing the summer program must be units of local government, public or private non-profit school food programs, or public or private non-profit residential summer camps. Half of the children they serve must meet the income guidelines for free and reduced-price school meals.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF CHILD CARE AND SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAMS

Availability of the programs:

Although both programs are federal entitlement programs, reimbursing the costs of all participating children, utilization is low. Only 6,650 children received summer meals through the program last summer. And although there were 83,000 licensed child care "slots" in 1987, only 29,500 children in child care received meals.

Several factors limit participation. Under USDA administration of the programs from San Francisco, outreach has had low priority. Management will be closer to home in the future; from October 1988 for the Child Care Food Program and from summer 1989 for the Summer Feeding Program, the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Olympia will administer the programs. To date, however, no outreach activities to increase program participation are planned.

A limiting factor for the Summer Feeding Program is federal restriction on the types of agencies eligible to operate it. Before 1981, non-profit agencies could be reimbursed for meals served to children. When many of these agencies were eliminated from the program, 500,000 fewer children in the country received meals.

Eligibility and Benefits: In order for a child to receive meals through the Summer Feeding Program, one-half the children being served by the program sponsor must meet free and reduced-price meal guidelines. Obviously, when half the children being served do not meet these guidelines, many eligible children are prevented from benefiting from the program.

The maximum number of meals reimbursed through the Child Care Food Program was reduced in 1981 to two meals and one snack instead of three meals and two snacks. Because many children spend most of the day in child care, meals they are served under current reimbursement levels may not provide adequate nutrition.

4. Senior Nutrition Programs

Basic funding for Senior Nutrition Programs comes from the federal Older Americans Act. In 1987 in Washington State, 53,248 seniors received congregate or group meals; 15,051 homebound seniors received meals delivered to their homes. A 124 percent increase has occurred over the last eight years in the number of home-delivered meals. The program has assumed high priority in assisting seniors to remain in their homes as an alternative to nursing home care.

Senior Nutrition Programs are important to participating seniors. Of those responding to the Task Force's Senior Survey, 19 percent said that without the help of their local program, they would have gone without food for one or more days during the past month.

More important, seniors living below the poverty level were not likely to receive food stamps or use food banks or other community resources. The senior meals programs are not limited to low-income seniors and are not seen as "welfare" programs by participants.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVENESS

Funding: Due to the growing over-60 population, the demand for Senior Nutrition has outstripped available resources. According to the Bureau of Aging and Adult Services, only a small number of programs in the state provide meals six or seven days a week, and most provide meals fewer than five days. Programs do not advertise their services because, by and large, they do not have the resources to serve more clients.

The number of high-risk elderly is rising and resources available for the wide range of services this group needs are inadequate. As a result, funding designated for senior meals has been transferred to other high-priority programs by local Area Agencies on Aging, which plan for and allocate Older Americans Act funds. This also limits the ability of nutrition programs to provide nutrition to seniors in need.

5. Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

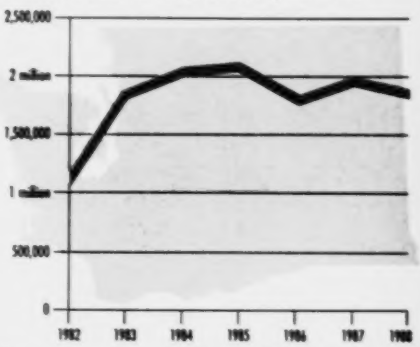
The Federal Surplus Commodities Program, or TEFAP, began in 1981 to reduce the level of government-held surplus dairy commodities and to provide cheese, butter and other products to low-income families. In 1988, 18.5 million pounds of commodities are being distributed in the state through a network of food banks and distribution sites.

The Department of General Administration (DGA) in Auburn administers the program in the state and provides a limited amount of funding to local agencies for distribution of the food. DGA has also been instrumental in developing linkages between distributing agencies, usually food banks, through annual meetings and, until 1987, a newsletter.

The federal government has announced plans to end distribution of surplus dairy commodities due to dwindling stockpiles. Not only would this reduce the amount of available food for hungry people in the state by 18.5 million pounds, but it would also end the federal funding which, although small in amount, has been extremely important in building food bank networks.

It is considered likely that Congress will approve legislation to continue the program, but it is expected that continuation will be contingent on increased requirements for verification of family income. Several verification proposals are under consideration by DGA. However, all would require increased record-keeping and administration by local food banks, which do not have staff or volunteers to do the work. In addition, proposed verification plans would restrict the availability of the food to the working poor and seniors, groups that have used commodities extensively when they could not access other programs.

POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED THROUGH FEDERAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES (TEFAP) PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON STATE, 1982-88



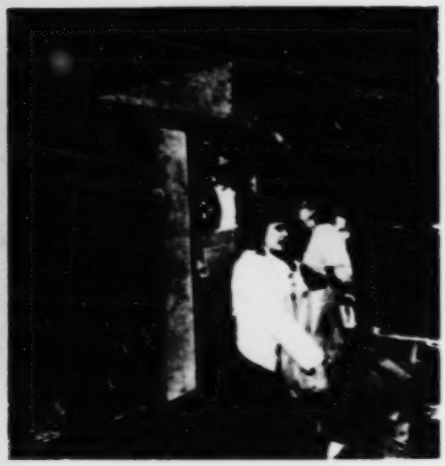
Source: Department of General Administration.

6. State Emergency Food Assistance Program

The Washington State Legislature has appropriated $475,000 a year

since 1985 for emergency food programs in the state. Funds are administered by the Department of Community Development through "lead agencies" in each county, which distribute the funds to local food banks, primarily for purchase of food.

The funds have provided core funding for the largely volunteer-run food bank system in the state. Provision of the limited funds acknowledged the critical role played by food banks and feeding programs across the state.



Private food assistance programs: food banks

A phenomenon of the past decade is the emergence and expanding role of food banks and feeding programs. Food banks started as an emergency measure during regional recessions. However, the privately-run programs have become a permanent fixture and a vital link in the fragile operating chain which channels food to the hungry in this state.

Food banks rely mainly on contributions from private sources: individuals, corporations and foundations. A wide cross-section of community businesses and organizations donates space, transportation, storage and food. The food industry itself actively supports food banks through donated food, transportation and other services. Support comes from food retailers, wholesalers, distributors, processors and growers.

Cementing this effort is an army of volunteers who drive trucks, serve food, make up food bags and administer the growing programs.

Limited public funds are available, including TEFAP, State Emergency Food Assistance, and FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Administration. It is estimated that for every $1 of public funds, $5 from the private sector supports food bank work. In some communities, notably Seattle, local public funds are an even more important factor.

Figure 1, earlier in this chapter, showed the organization of food programs in the state, including food banks. In the past decade, more than 300 food distribution organizations and local food outlets have developed in our state. The two largest food distribution agencies are Food Lifeline, which is affiliated with the national food solicitation organization Second Harvest, and EMM Northwest Harvest in Seattle. The two agencies respectively distributed 8 million and 9.6 million pounds of donated and purchased food through local outlets to hungry people in the state last year. Estimates of the number of visits made to state food banks range from a conservative 3 million (reported to the Department of Community Development) to 6 million.

Food banks serve a wide and varying population. Increasingly, families with children are food bank clients. A 1987 survey by the Spokane Food Bank found that over half of food recipients were children, 23 percent of them under six. Each food bank has developed to serve the particular needs of its local community. Many serve, in addition to more general clientele, such distinct groups as AIDS patients, infants, specific ethnic or age groups, people without cooking facilities, or tribal members.

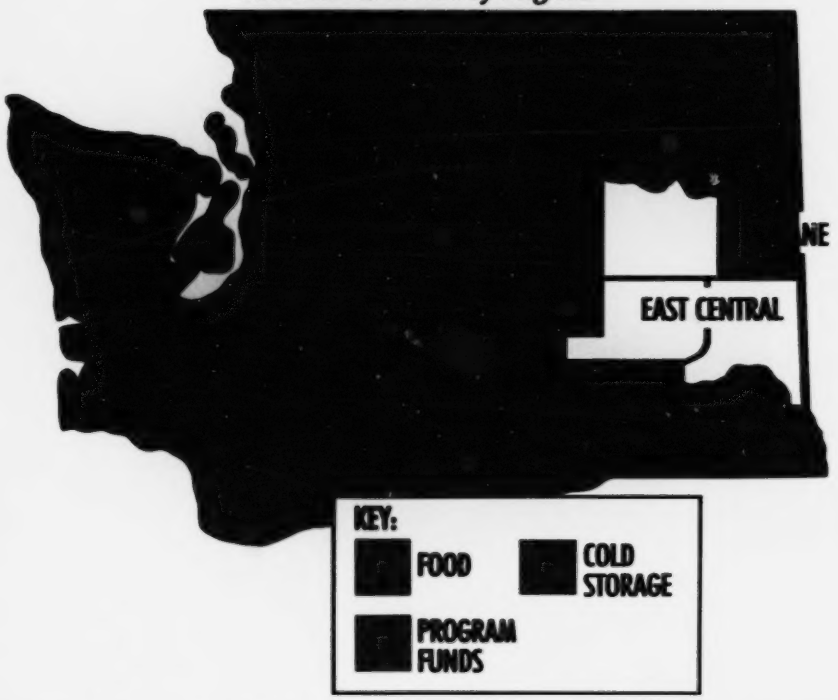
The Task Force Senior Survey found very low food bank use, 10 percent, although 44 percent of the seniors said they received food from the TEFAP or Surplus Commodities Program. The Family Survey found overall use of food banks varied considerably between Seattle (61 percent), Yakima (45 percent) and Pend Oreille County (28 percent). Food bank use increased with the degree of hunger experienced by families interviewed, with 65 percent to 86 percent of severely hungry families using community food banks.

Available resources and local food distribution policies affect the way food banks operate in local communities. In Seattle, food banks are partially supported by the city; clients may receive a bag of food a week. In other communities, use is restricted to once per month, or even once per quarter or twice a year. Other food banks put no restrictions on use. Most food banks state that they provide users with enough for two to three days, although the actual types and amounts of foods vary tremendously. The Task Force found that families surveyed could average two meals from a Seattle food bank bag and nearly five meals from a Pend Oreille food bank bag.

Problems facing food banks

Food banks were first started to feed hungry people on a short-term basis. A decade later, these programs are still struggling to meet needs that are no longer temporary. Funding sources that were willing to support emergency help now question their continuing commitment and seek longer-term solutions. Volunteers who thought they would work several months

FIRST PRIORITY NEEDS
Food Banks in Survey Regions



are weary from making do with too few resources and too little public support.

"We have people lining up at 7 a.m. to get food bags at 1 p.m. and we are out of food by 2:30. And this is an area that is supposed to be in good shape economically."

—Seattle food bank operator

The Task Force survey found that in most regions of the state, food banks say what they need most is more food. In central Washington, where gleaned food is plentiful, storage is the key problem. Everywhere, food banks stated that they needed funding, staff and volunteers to distribute the food donated and purchased.

Food banks across the state are working through two coalitions, the Western Washington Food Coalition and the Northwest Regional Food Coalition, to coordinate transportation of surplus food from areas where it is plentiful to areas where it is not. Food banks surveyed by the Task Force stated that communication and cooperation between agencies is the best element of the food bank system and also the element most needed. Another serious need is for a uniform way to count food bank clients. Currently, food banks use many different methods, so there is no way to monitor total usage and thus get an indication of hunger trends.

Food banks have added to their importance by becoming a voice for hungry people in the state, documenting the existence of hunger in their communities and advocating public policy changes that will help low-income people. Legislative action has been limited because there is no statewide voice for food banks, just as there is no statewide organization able to communicate the concerns of food banks to administrators of public food programs in the state.

Conclusion

A framework of food assistance programs exists in the state. However, numerous factors keep the programs from having the impact they could. Funding is only one aspect. Other needs include outreach, assistance and education about available help, and a reduction in the complexity of application procedures.

In other instances, the state is not taking advantage of resources available at the federal level that could help hungry residents, particularly children.

A commitment is needed to make hunger relief a public priority in the state. No state agency currently coordinates food programs. No one is responsibile for monitoring the problem of hunger in the state. On the private food assistance side, no statewide organization exists to effectively communicate the tragedy of the hungry among us to the public or to the legislature.

In the next chapter, the Task Force will outline proposals for making hunger a top-priority item in the State of Washington.

5. WHAT CAN WE DO?

The preceding chapters have documented the existence and nature of hunger in Washington State, identified the basic causes of hunger, and examined the systems and assistance programs now in place to deal with the problem. The next step is recommendations for action to solve the problem of hunger in our state.

The Governor's Task Force on Hunger is a broad group with diverse professional and philosophical backgrounds, representing the distinct geographical areas of the state. The recommendations that follow represent a consensus of this group and a blueprint for legislative, administrative and private sector action. As presented here, they are of necessity broad. The accompanying priority chart seeks to provide additional direction to policy makers at the state and federal level as to the relative priorities for action of those recommendations that deal with the immediate problem of lack of food.

The Governor's Task Force on Hunger believes that significantly decreasing hunger in our state is a realistic goal. The recommendations that follow include 24 that deal directly with the lack of food and resources to obtain food; eight that deal directly with lack of income, e.g. poverty, the immediate cause of hunger; and six that go beyond symptoms and short term solutions to suggest changes in our economy and our society to attack the underlying causes of insufficient income.

Lack of food

Food assistance was a major focus of Task Force work. In developing the following recommendations that deal with needed changes in both public and private food assistance in the state, the Task Force agreed upon a framework for the recommendations.

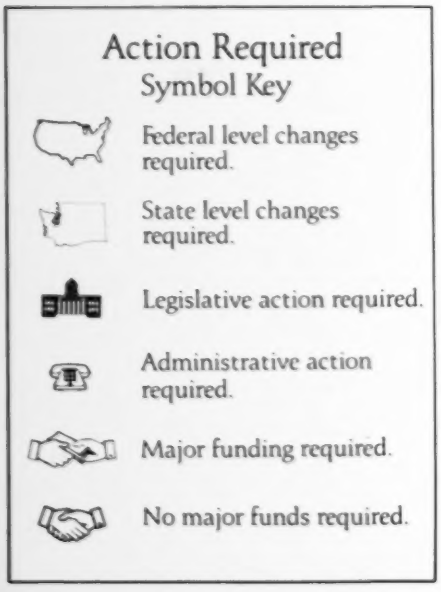
Framework for Food Assistance Recommendations

1. Policy of the Washington State legislature and government departments should reflect the basic and essential role of public food assistance programs in combating hunger in the state. It is the responsibility of these programs to meet primary food assistance needs in the state and funding from the federal and state level should be adequate to meet these needs.
2. Administrative policy in these public food programs should focus upon increasing access to food assistance by people in need, not constructing and maintaining barriers designed to limit caseloads.
3. State policy and action should insure that all federal funds for food assistance available to the State of Washington are identified and utilized in this State.
4. Policy of Washington State government departments and the private food distribution programs and coalitions should reflect the emergency role of food banks and meal programs. Food banks are emergency food sources. They cannot be expected to provide ongoing, basic food support for families and individuals experiencing food shortages in the State.
5. Government and private organizational policy should reflect a commitment to the adequate funding of public and private programs. While it is a priority for the state to

adequately fund public programs, there is a legitimate public interest in continuing to support the food banking system as an emergency service and as an alternative for those not currently well served by public programs.

6. Policy development must be undertaken in support of efforts to create a deliberate system of food assistance services that most effectively distribute available resources throughout the state. Elements of this system include improved coordination of programs at the state and local level, and formal and informal structures between private and public programs.

The following recommendations are organized by topic, not in priority order. Each is accompanied by symbols that indicate whether it requires state or federal action and whether it will need additional public funding to be implemented. The chart at the end of the food assistance recommendations places them in priority order by category: state legislative and administrative actions or federal changes and initiatives.



Food Stamp Program

Recommended changes in benefit levels, eligibility, and federal administration:

1. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations advocate with the Washington State Congressional Delegation for the following changes in the Food Stamp Program in order to better meet the needs of hungry families and individuals in Washington State:
   - A. Increase Food Stamp benefit levels to more accurately support adequate nutrition on a long-term basis, rather than continuing to base the benefit amount on the Thrifty Food Plan.
   - B. Increase the current vehicle exclusion limitation to reflect inflation for the period 1977-88 and then index it to the Consumer Price Index.
   - C. Revise the current implementation of Monthly Reporting and Retrospective Budgeting (MRRB) administrative policies in the Food Stamp Program so that Food Stamp monthly benefits are based not on a single previous month, but a six month average of monthly income.
   - D. Change the federal error rate targets to a more realistic level than the current 5 percent.
   - E. Make permanent the current federal law provision which allows homeless persons in shelters to receive food stamps.
   - F. Mandate Food Stamp Program outreach to underserved populations.
   - G. Exempt as Food Stamp income the $50 child support pass through for AFDC/FIP recipients.

Recommended changes in state administration:

2. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that legislation be initiated at the state level to establish and provide funding for outreach and nutritional education services designed to increase access to food assistance programs such as Food Stamps, WIC, Senior Nutrition and Child Nutrition Programs. Outreach should be provided through local non profit community based agencies.
3. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that DSHS develop and implement measures designed to increase access to Food Stamp offices by those most in need, particularly rural residents. Areas to consider include:
   - A. Geographic distribution of Community Services Offices, branches and outstations.
   - B. Office hours.
   - C. Increased use of mail and telephone contacts.
4. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that DSHS revise and consolidate application forms for the Food Stamp Program and establish a review process by service recipients for all forms with the goal of increasing understanding of the forms by applicants.

Recommended changes to improve expedited issuance of food stamps:

5. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor or legislature initiate action to require that applicants

who are eligible for expedited issuance of food stamps receive those stamps by 5 p.m. the next working day following application for expedited issuance. In implementing this recommendation, DSHS should immediately begin an information campaign on availability of expedited issuance as well as initiate computer tracking of applications and receipt of expedited services in order to extend the responsiveness and availability of this underutilized service.

Recommended monitoring of Family Independence Program (FIP):

6. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor insure that the "Food Stamp cash out" provisions of FIP are closely monitored by DSHS to determine the impact the cash out may have on food shortages and the nutritional status of recipient families, and that modifications are made in implementation of the cash out if negative impact is determined.

WIC Program

Recommended changes in the funding level:

7. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations advocate with the Washington Congressional Delegation for increases in federal funding to expand the availability and equity of the highly effective WIC program to the level needed to serve all eligible women, infants and children.
8. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Washington State Legislature continue to provide supplemental funding to the WIC program to insure that all available federal funds are utilized to provide this high priority program to eligible women, infants and children in the State of Washington.

Recommended implementation of formula cost savings:

9. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that DSHS WIC Program implement immediately a competitive bidding process for infant formula purchased through the program in order to extend the effectiveness of available funding and serve more women, infants and children.

Recommended improvement in coordination:

10. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that DSHS implement measures to improve the coordination between the WIC program and the Medicaid program to insure prompt referral between programs and prompt response on cases identified by the WIC program as potentially Medicaid eligible so that more eligible pregnant women, infants and children are protected by Medicaid coverage.

Child Nutrition Programs

Recommended changes in program access:

11. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) initiate a vigorous campaign to recognize and support school feeding programs as integral components of the role of the public school system in the state.
12. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that legislation be initiated to require participation in the National School Lunch Program by all school districts in the state and that OSPI continue to provide technical assistance and support to school districts to promote maximum utilization of federal funds for free and reduced-price meals for our children.
13. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that legislation be initiated to require that all school districts provide School Breakfast in all schools with greater than 25 percent of students eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program and that OSPI continue to provide technical assistance and support to school districts to promote maximum utilization of federal funds for free and reduced-price meals for our children.
14. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor, OSPI and the State Legislature initiate and adopt measures to increase participation by children eligible for reduced-price breakfast and lunch in the state. Possible measures for increasing participation are a state subsidy to bring down the meal price for participants, a campaign to encourage school districts to voluntarily lower the price of reduced-price meals, a campaign to encourage families meeting income guidelines to enroll in the program.
15. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Superintendent of Public Instruction expedite implementation of legislation passed in the 1987 Legislative Session which authorized OSPI to administer the USDA Summer Feeding and Child Care Food Programs in the state. These programs are currently administered by USDA in San

Francisco. Once administration of these programs has been implemented, OSPI should immediately begin a campaign to expand the local agencies administering the Child Care Food Program, and the local agencies participating in the Summer Feeding Program so that all eligible children in the state will have the opportunity to participate in these important Child Nutrition Programs.

Recommended changes in benefits:

16. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations advocate with the state's Congressional Delegation for increases in the Child Care Food Program which would provide an additional meal and snack to children served by the program in day care centers or homes open more than eight hours per day.

Recommended changes in implementation limits:

17. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations advocate through the Washington State Congressional Delegation for changes in national legislation to reinstate non-profit agencies as eligible local administrators of the Summer Feeding Program in order to expand the number of programs in this state offering this important summer nutrition program.

Senior Nutrition Program

Recommended changes in funding level and administration:

18. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations work actively with the Congressional Delegation and the State Legislature to increase funds available on the state and federal level for senior nutrition programs. While the Task Force recognizes the value of socialization to the nutrition process of at-risk seniors, the home delivered meals programs should have priority for funding. In addition, increased funding should be targeted to low-income seniors and efforts to collect donations from seniors who are able to pay should be increased to further stretch program dollars.

19. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the administrators of the Older Americans Act at the state level strongly discourage the current practice of transferring funds from nutrition services to other senior services, although we realize that the lack of sufficient funding for the full range of services to high-risk elderly citizens forces difficult choices at the local and regional level.

Coordination Between Public Food Programs

20. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor assign a single point in state government with the responsibility for coordination of all food assistance programs funded and/or administered through the state and that a citizens' advisory committee with representation from private food assistance programs be established to provide input on coordination issues in order to make ending hunger in the state of Washington a focal issue for state government.

Surplus Commodities (TEFAP)

21. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the Governor and all other interested individuals and organizations advocate with the Congressional Delegation for continued federal support of the Surplus Commodities Program (TEFAP) because the Surplus Commodities Program provides an important source of food to many people unable to access other nutrition programs. TEFAP food should continue to be available to current recipients and to the working poor.

State Emergency Food Assistance Program

22. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends continued funding by the state legislature of food banks and food distribution programs through the Emergency Food Assistance Program administered by the Department of Community Development.

Food Bank Coalitions

23. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the two current food bank coalitions, the Northwest Regional Food Network and the Western Washington Food Coalition, join together as soon as possible to provide a statewide focus for food issues and concerns. The function of this statewide organization would include:

    A. Networking and advocacy with other food assistance programs on a statewide basis.

B. Networking with food bank volunteers and staff to improve efficiency and access in the state; serving as a forum and resource for efforts to improve funding, staffing, distribution, transportation, storage and other needs.

C. Technical assistance on how to train food bank volunteers and staff on food bank operations, board development, fundraising, food solicitation, as well as how to provide information and assistance to food bank clients on how to access other needed services.

D. Monitoring of hunger and food assistance in the state and nationally.

E. Training of local organizations on nutrition monitoring, client advocacy, etc.

F. Public awareness campaigns designed to increase media exposure of hunger issues.

G. Special projects, including food assistance outreach, nutrition education, gardening, etc.

The importance of an ongoing statewide organization to keep the issue of hunger before the people of the state should not be underestimated. In states where major legislative action has taken place on hunger (Maryland, Texas, Minnesota, New York), a funded statewide organization with a long term commitment made the changes happen.

24. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the food bank coalition develop and implement a uniform reporting system for use by food banks and feeding programs throughout the state in monitoring their use and that a report be made at least annually by the coalition to the coordinating agency in state government responsible for public food assistance.

Lack of Income: direct responses

The following recommendations respond to the lack of income which almost invariably is the most immediate cause of hunger. They call for policy decisions which will increase individual income, increase supports to those in need so they will have greater disposable income for food, and create more opportunity for employment and training so individuals can find employment and earn more.

These recommendations, and the recommendations that follow in the LACK OF INCOME: BROADER RESPONSES section are included because without efforts aimed at reducing poverty in the state, actions to reduce hunger will deal with symptoms only. It is important to link ending hunger with reducing poverty in the state. However, Task Force recommendations in these areas are very general and are not meant to replace more exhaustive study of the causes of poverty in the state and more specific recommendations for addressing these causes.

Recommended changes to increase individual income:

25. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that basic Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payments provided through the state's Family Independence Program (FIP) be set at 100 percent of the Standard of Need (the minimum amount DSHS determines families need) and indexed to annual rates of inflation.

26. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the state minimum wage be increased for all workers. We believe that the current minimum wage affects hunger in the state because it is at an unacceptably low level.

27. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that state policy actively promote child support payment schedules that are adequate in amount and enforced.

Recommended changes to free up more income for food, by decreasing impact of factors that detract from disposable income:

28. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that government and business in the State of Washington join together to implement an aggressive program of development of quality child care resources which should include state subsidies for child care for low-income workers which are reflective of actual child care costs.

29. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that federal housing programs be restored to the pre-1980 level for those families earning less than 50 percent of the median income.

30. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends expansion of the resources of the Washington State Housing Trust Fund to more adequately respond to low-income housing needs in the state.

31. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that Washington State in partnership with the private sector develop additional ways to improve the access to medical coverage by low-income families currently

not covered by Medicaid or private insurance.

Employment Training and Counseling:

32. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that employment training, counseling and placement resources should be made more accessible for the following groups: individuals without jobs due to reasons including layoffs, displacement, relocation of employment to other areas or states, physical impairment, or inexperience in the workplace; "discouraged workers," particularly those in rural areas; and single parents.

Lack of Income: broader responses

Many facets of public policy affect the lives of low-income state residents. The following recommendations deal with some of these areas and their impact on hunger. Economic development, tax reform, education and community support are only a few of the broader influences on poverty and hunger in our state but they are issues the Task Force investigated and developed ideas for changes that would reduce hunger in the state.

Economic Development:

33. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that state economic development policy formally include an increased focus on the utilization of unemployed and low-income workers and that a higher priority be placed on community-based economic devleopment in small towns and low-income neighborhoods.

34. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the State of Washington take responsibility for a single point of coordination of its efforts in economic development which are currently divided between the Department of Community Development, Department of Trade and Economic Development and Department of Employment Security. This lack of coordination affects economic development in the state, which affects poverty and hunger.

Tax Reform:

35. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the state review the tax structure to eliminate factors that negatively impact low-income people. We believe that the current state tax structure disproportionately affects low-income people in the state.

Education:

36. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that the State of Washington expand its funding commitment to the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) as well as advocate for increases at the federal level in funding for Head Start.

Community Support:

37. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recognizes the significant role played by communities and private institutions in alleviating hunger and recommends that public and private agencies and organizations encourage and wherever possible enable communities and private institutions to better serve those in need.

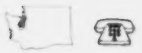
38. The Governor's Task Force on Hunger recommends that low-income people be included in all public and private efforts to alleviate poverty and hunger in the state.

Recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Hunger

Chart of Priorities

I. State food assistance measures requiring legislative change. Recommended for implementation as soon as possible.

Priority	Number of Recommendation	Subject	Responsibility	State Funding Required
1	2	Food Assistance Outreach	Legislative	$250,000-$500,000/yr.
2	5	Expedited Food Stamps	Legislative	None; depends on implementation
3	8	WIC Supplemental Funding	Legislative (continuing)	Currently: $500,000/biennium
4	12	School Lunch Mandate	Legislative	30% Match on Basic Lunch Reimbursement Only
5	13	School Breakfast Mandate	Legislative	None
6	18	Senior Nutrition Funding	Legislative	$500,000-$1,000,000/yr.
7	22	Food Bank	Legislative (continuing)	Currently: $950,000/biennium



II. State food assistance measures requiring administrative changes. Recommended for implementation **immediately.**

Priority	Number of Recommendation	Subject	Responsibility	Major Funding Required
1	20	Establish State Coordinating Focus	Governor	Depends on Implementation
2	9	WIC Formula Cost Savings	DSHS: Division of Children & Family Services	None; expected costs savings of $3.8 - $6.3 million
3	19	Discourage transfer of funds from Senior Nutrition	DSHS: Bureau of Aging & Adult Services	None
4	15	Expedite State admin. of Summer Feeding & Child Care Food Prgms.	OSPI	None

5	3,4	Food Stamp access	DSHS: Division of Income Assistance	None	
6	6	FIP monitoring	Governor/ DSHS	None	
7	23,24	Food Bank Coalitions/ uniform reporting	Food Bank Coalitions	Public & Private funds needed; however amount not major	
8	11	OSPI policy supporting School Food Programs	OSPI	None	
9	14	Measures to increase use of reduced-price school meal programs	OSPI	Varies with measure	
10	10	Coordination of WIC and Medicaid Programs	DSHS	None	

III. Federal Food Assistance measures requiring changes in federal legislation and funding. Recommended for implementation as soon as possible.

Priority	Number of Recommendation	Subject	Responsibility	Funding Required
1	1	Food Stamp revisions	Legislative	Yes
2	7	WIC funding	Legislative	Yes
3	21	TEFAP continuation	Legislative	Yes
4	17	Summer feeding extension	Legislative	No
5	18	Senior Nutrition funding	Legislative	Yes
6	16	Child Care food increase	Legislative	Yes

NOTE

In August, 1988, after this report was in production, the Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 was passed by the U.S. Congress. The Act responds to some of the federal level issues raised in this report and Washington State members of Congress Tom Foley and Mike Lowry were instrumental in its passage. The Act includes changes in the following areas:

Food Stamps

- increases benefits by 3% by 1990 (although retaining the Thrifty Food Plan as the basis for benefits);
- allows states to drop or limit monthly reporting for households;
- alters error rate requirements (although the new standards and potential impact are not yet known);
- makes permanent eligibility for food stamps for homeless people living in shelters;
- provides federal matching funds to states for food stamp outreach *and* training of volunteers and staff of agencies and non-profit organizations that provide food stamp information and outreach (effective 1989).

Child Care Food Program

- provides funding for an additional meal *or* snack for children attending child care centers (not homes) that operate for more than 8 hours a day.

TEFAP (Surplus Commodities)

- provides $140 million for purchase of commodities for distribution over a 3 year period.
- authorizes $50 million in administrative funding over a 2 year period.

Recognizing and appreciating the importance of this legislation, the Task Force emphasizes that major areas still need to be addressed if we are to arrive at effective solutions to the hunger problem.

6. WHAT WE STAND TO GAIN— OR LOSE.

All the preceding recommendations imply some benefit to individuals in Washington State who are experiencing hunger. Yet the legislators and administrators who may be asked to initiate changes in or expansions of existing programs, and citizens who may be asked to support them, deserve concrete assurance that time and money will be well spent.

Perhaps the most powerful argument for beginning the attack on hunger now is that the longer we put it off, the more it will cost—not only in monetary terms, but also in terms of human suffering and the waste of human potential.

The unthinkable alternative

What if we do nothing? What if hunger continues to grow and to affect more families, individuals and communities? What will be the consequence, over the short and the long term, for the citizens and the future of Washington State?

Hunger and chronic under-nutrition—a prolonged lack of food—have a serious negative impact in a number of areas. In children, capacity to learn is reduced; physical development, stamina and resistance to disease are impaired. The impact of hunger on working adults is also serious. Undernutrition has been linked to reduced productivity and increased illness, leading to more absence from work. Hunger in senior citizens limits their ability to lead independent lives, and negatively affects their health. Hunger's cost is manifest in higher unemployment, lowered productivity and greater demands on the public coffers.

Low birthweight children

Low birthweight is the single most important factor associated with infant mortality as well as with developmental problems in children. Women who do not receive prenatal care are three times more likely to give birth to low birthweight babies. Without prenatal care and without adequate funding of WIC, we could see dangerous increases in the number of low birthweight babies.

For example, trends like this will continue: In 1980-1982, a period of high unemployment, the number of women in Washington State's three largest metropolitan areas who received late or no prenatal care increased, and so did the proportion of low birthweight babies born in these cities' low-income tracts. This was reported in 1985 in an article in the American Journal of Public Health.

As for the costs associated with low birthweight: The immediate hospital cost for each low birthweight, sick, disabled infant ranges from $13,616 to $100,000. In addition, *maternity and maternity-related hospital care is the single largest contributor to uncompensated hospital bills, which came to between $4.5 and $6.2 billion in the nation in 1978-1982.* Compare these costs to the average cost of prenatal care of $4,000. Each dollar not spent on WIC alone costs $3 in hospital costs.

Not providing adequate prenatal, infant and child nutrition will cost the state and the nation millions in the future.

Learning and development

Research confirms that inadequate nutrition has a negative effect on children's learning,

behavior and productivity. As poverty becomes more prevalent, this lends greater urgency to the need to free low-income children from the constraints of hunger. Equal educational opportunity is an American priority. It should include equal opportunity to obtain food and nutrition necessary for learning.

"Food, for children, is the main source of security. If we want them to engage in what are scary experiences to them, such as learning to read, we have to supply them well with...(food). We have to do that for them when we want them to begin the dangerous exploration of letters and words, as we would have to fill their knapsacks full of good food if they were going to explore the wilderness."

—Bruno Bettelheim, child psychologist

Nutrition researchers agree that affects behavior in a way that interferes with the normal learning process. The Task Force Family Survey found that children in hungry families were more likely to experience such problems as fatigue, headaches, irritability, inability to concentrate and unwanted weight loss. Other research links hunger with increased nervousness and disinterest in learning. Hungry children may be passive, apathetic, and timid, making few demands on their environment or the people in it.

Even more serious than short-term hunger are the resultant prolonged conditions of chronic undernutrition and iron deficiency anemia. Chronic undernutrition is the most prevalent type of malnutrition in the nation and seriously affects children's health. It slows growth, increases the risk of infection and lost school days, and makes children less physically active, less attentive, more apathetic and anxious, and not interested in exploring their environment. Iron deficiency anemia, especially prevalent in low-income children, in even mild cases has significant effects on behavior: shortened attention span, irritability, fatigue, lower scholastic performance, memory impairment, and less ability to combat disease. When these two ills occur at the same time, the impact can be devastating to children's prospects.

Children in low-income families whose start in life is thus affected will have more difficulty in rising above the poverty level—and therefore, will be more likely to become dependent on costly public assistance.

Senior citizens

Welfare of senior citizens cannot fail to impact the nation's welfare. Their number has grown twice as fast as the rest of the population. They are heavy users of health care, accounting for one-third of hospital beds, one-fourth of total health expenditures and three-fifths of public expenditures on health care.

Clearly, anything that reduces these expenditures will benefit the nation. Better nutrition for low-income seniors is high on the list of solutions. Research has shown that poor nutrition increases health care costs and decreases independence. According to a 1987 study published in the Journal of Health and Social Behavior, elderly individuals who are nutritionally at risk are more likely to need emergency room care and hospitalization. Nutritional risk also affects the number of doctor visits. These three areas—emergency room care, hospitalization and doctor visits—are the most expensive aspects of the Medicare system.

Here in Washington, the Task Force found that 26 percent of seniors surveyed across the state were nutritionally at risk. Among seniors with incomes below the poverty level, an even higher prevalence of risk was found: 41 percent. If we do not act, these seniors will continue to need expensive health care and will be limited in their ability to live independently. The choice is clear: help senior citizens get the food they need, or pay for increased medical costs.

Conclusion

In this report, we have seen that hunger does indeed exist in Washington State. A projection based on Task Force research supports an estimate of *at least* 232,800 residents of the state who are suffering from hunger and food shortage problems.

We have seen hunger's serious effects on children and senior citizens—two of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

We have examined the causes of hunger, which go far beyond the simplistic reason—lack of resources to obtain food—and reach all the way to the state's and nation's economic and social policies, and the value we place on the individual in our society.

We have studied the systems that struggle to deal with hunger, and evaluated their effectiveness, while presenting evidence that they could work much better.

With this foundation, we have presented the recommendations of the Task Force for steps to alleviate the problem.

Finally, we have asked the question: what will be the costs of postponing the attack on hunger?

The next step: action—based on a willingness to face the facts, and a recognition of how much is at stake, in human and economic terms. The legislature and state administration can address many of the problems outlined in this report immediately, with the support of an informed and concerned electorate. Citizens can press for action not only at the state level, but also with their representatives in Washington, D.C. And they can help to make community and private-sector efforts to reduce hunger more effective.

The recommendations in Chapter 5 constitute a blueprint for the next phase. The pieces are in place for a constructive assault on hunger in Washington State. It is conceivable that our state could become "hunger-free" by the year 2,000, with boldness and determination on the part of the government, the community and the individual citizen.

We have the resources to eradicate hunger; it is time to translate a general concern into specific action.

LUMBER YARD
Bloomsday '87

HUNGER IN WASHINGTON STATE

Acknowledgements

The following organizations have provided major financial, in-kind and technical support to the Governor's Task Force on Hunger. Without their assistance, the work of the Task Force would not have been possible.

Our thanks go to:

Burlington Northern Foundation for primary financial support

Washington State Department of Community Development for support of Task Force activities

SAFECO Insurance Companies for design and printing of this report

Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, Food Research and Action Center, for seed funds for the Family Survey, technical assistance and support

Ager/Borders, Perrin and Norrander for public relations services

Washington Mutual Financial Group for printing services

Washington Water Power for printing of report appendices

US WEST Communications for printing of report appendices

Washington State Food Dealers Association for milk coupons for Family Survey participants

School of Social Work and Human Services, Eastern Washington University for practicum students, Family Survey interviewers and support

Eastern Washington University for computer time

Northwest Regional Foundation for serving as administrative agent

Special thanks to

- **the thousand of families and individuals who participated in Task Force surveys across the state**
- **the hundreds of experts in the private and public sector who provided us with information, ideas and comments**
- **the thousands of people in the State of Washington who are working in private organizations as well as public agencies to decrease hunger in our state**
- **the members and leadership of the Western Washington Food Coalition and Northwest Regional Food Network for their work and their support.**

The following individuals assisted the Task Force in examining the problem of hunger in Washington State:

People Who Presented Information and Ideas at Task Force Meetings

Ivan Bush, East Central Community Center, Spokane
Mari Clack, Governor's Office, Olympia
Jay Champion, Salvation Army, Seattle
Bob Delobenfelz, Food Resource Network, Seattle
Eleanor Ficele, Yakima Food Coordinating Committee and Department of Social and Health Services, Yakima
John Froyd, First Baptist Food Bank, Seattle
Joan Holcomb, Bainbridge Island Helpline
Lois Irwin, Partnership for Rural Improvement, Spokane
Janet Kline, Small Tribes of Western Washington, Sumner
Mike Levenson, Department of General Administration, Olympia
Sandi Lewis, Food Lifeline, Seattle
Susan McIntyre, Washington Association of Churches Refugee Resettlement Program, Spokane
Carol McKannay, NW Regional Food Network, White Salmon
Mary Jo Mengerelli, Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, WIC Program

Betty Jane Narver, Institute for Public Policy and Management, University of Washington
John Nicholson, Department of General Administration, Olympia
Louise O'Neil, Senior Services of Snohomish County
Christine Pratt-Marsten, National Anti-Hunger Coalition, Lynnwood
Mark Provo, Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development Association, Colville
Vince Rickert, St. Vincent's Center, Toppenish
Bill Riley, Kittitas Community Action Council, Ellensburg
Pat Russell, Food Stamp Outreach Project, Seattle
Trudy Smith, FISH Food Banks, Tacoma
K. C. Spangler, Food Resource Network; Seattle Food Committee
Janet Ulrich, Yakima Food Bank
Joe Valentine, Family Independence Program Team, DSHS, Olympia
Joyce Ware, Field Supervisor, Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, Yakima
Pat Wendler, Spokane Food Bank
Terry Wittman, City of Seattle

FACING THE FACTS: TASK FORCE FAMILY AND SENIOR SURVEY

Technical Advisory Committee

Rita Brogan, Chair
Member, Governor's Task Force on Hunger
Superintendent of Public Transit Development
METRO, Seattle

Stephen C. Forman
Member, Governor's Task Force on Hunger
Staff Assistant
King County Executive, Seattle

Stuart Elway, Ph.D.
President
Elway Research, Seattle

Betty Lou Sherry, Ph.D.
Instructor, Maternal and Child Health Program
School of Public Health and Community Medicine
University of Washington, Seattle

Al Shannon
Director, Business Research
US WEST Communications, Seattle

Michael Garrick
Planning and Evaluation Section
Department of Social and Health Services, Olympia

Don Dillman, Ph.D.
Director, Social and Economic Survey Research Center (SESRC)
Washington State University, Pullman

Key Resources

Cheryl Wehler
Project Director, Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project
Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.

Lynn Morris, Ph.D.
Professor, School of Social Work and Human Services
Eastern Washington University, Cheney

Betty Jane Narver
Director, Institute for Public Policy and Management
University of Washington, Seattle

Tad Blalock, Ph.D.
Sociology Department
University of Washington, Seattle

Greg Weeks
Washington State Institute for Public Policy
The Evergreen State College, Olympia

Deborah Ward, Ph.D.
Department of Nursing
School of Public Health and Community Medicine
University of Washington, Seattle

Deborah O'Connor
Accountant, Northwest Regional Foundation, Spokane

Robert Stilger
Executive Director, Northwest Regional Foundation, Spokane

Audrey Rose
Senior Nutrition Program, Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development Association, Colville

Jim Snider
Planner, Eastern Washington Area Agency on Aging, Spokane

Louise O'Neill
Director, Senior Nutrition Program, Senior Services of Snohomish County

Rob Fersh, Lynn Parker, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.

Participating School Districts:

Seattle Public Schools
Yakima Public Schools
Wapato School District
Newport School District
Cusick School District
Selkirk School District

Participating Senior Nutrition Programs and Area Agencies on Aging:

Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development Association, Colville
Eastern Washington Area Agency on Aging, Spokane
Small Tribes of Western Washington, Sumner
Southeast Washington Area Agency on Aging, Yakima
North Central Washington Area Agency on Aging, Wenatchee
Older Americans Nutrition Program, Yakima
Pierce County Area Agency on Aging, Tacoma
Kittitas County Action Council, Ellensburg
Benton-Franklin Council on Aging
Senior Nutrition Program, Spokane County Health District
Senior Services of Snohomish County, Everett

Family Survey Field Staff:

Seattle:

Field Supervision:

Institute for Public Policy and Management, University of Washington:
- Betty Jane Narver
- Heidi Werling
- Suzanne Windels

Field Assistance:

Central Area Motivation Program:
- Larry Gossett
- Zachery Bruce
- Helen Campbell

Asian Counseling and Referral Service:
- Theresa Fujiwara

Interviewers:

Daisy Brooks-Addy
Jacqueline Brooks-Addy
Denise Beaver
Sharon Burleson
Lan T. Huynh
Sandra Ibe
Elva Pope
Pamela Taylor
Jacquelyn Thornton
Nu Van Tran
Tuyet Nhung Tran
Johnny Yang Yer

Yakima:

Field Supervision:

Joyce Ware

Field Assistance:

Eleanor Ficele, Volunteer Coordinator, DSHS
Kay Haynes, Task Force Member and Director, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing, Yakima

Translation:

Miquel and Maria Elena Ortega, Villamar Enterprises, Toppenish

Interviewers:

Sharon Barrett
Rena Ann Buys
Anita Dudley
Gloria Feehan
Ray Flores
Laura Hughes
Esther Huizar
Arlene Ingram
Mary Kay Lynch
Kay Roberts
Gloria Tovar
Nancy Valicoff

Pend Oreille County:

Field Supervision:

Jon Quinn-Hurst, Task Force Research Assistant

Field Assistance:

Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development Association, Colville:
Bruce Pennell, Task Force Member and Director
Jeff McElhinney
Bonnie Crotteau

Interviewers:

Graduate Students, School of Social Work and Human Services, Eastern Washington University, Cheney:

Linda Canham
Susan Eakins
Rick Fairbanks
Jeanette Kelley
Sandra Kleven
Paul Norstog
Jan Preston
Deborah Vintch
Marcia Gay
Deena Roloff

Data Analysis

Scott Nicholson, Task Force Research Assistant
Beverly Corum, Data Entry, Spokane

Growth Study

Funding assistance: Jeff Carpenter, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia

Corine J. Olson, Director, Health Education Center, Educational Service District 121, Seattle

Principle Investigator: Betty Lou Sherry, Ph.D., Instructor, Maternal and Child Health Program, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle

Research Assistant: Steven Garrett

Participating School Districts: Issaquah Public Schools
Colville School District
Chewelah School District

WHY HUNGER EXISTS:

"Major Causes of Hunger in Washington State"

Participants in February 1987 Meeting to Identify Issues

Steve Berger, Union Gospel Mission, Seattle
Dr. Kathryn Briar, Department of Social and Health Services, Child and Family Services
Juan Bocanegra, Downtown Human Services Council, Seattle
Ken Cole, Downtown Emergency Service Center, Seattle
Yolanda Campbell, El Centro de la Raza, Seattle
Ann Fitzpatrick, Food Connection, Tacoma
Linda Flannigan, Food Connection, Tacoma
John Froyd, First Baptist Food Bank, Seattle
Dr. Maurice Foisy, Western Washington University, Bellingham
Karen Funsten, Alternatives to Hunger, Bellingham
Dierdre Godfrey, Fair Budget Action Campaign, Seattle
Graciela Gonzales, El Centro de la Raza, Seattle
Karen Kauchausky, Pike Market Senior Center, Seattle
Jon Le Veque, Alliance for Children, Youth and Families, Seattle
Marge Leuders, Gray Panthers, Seattle
Betty Jane Narver, Institute for Public Policy and Management, University of Washington
K. C. Spangler, Food Resource Network, Seattle Food Committee

Reviewers of Initial Draft of "Major Causes" Document, December 1987

Steven A. Bauck, EMM Northwest Harvest, Seattle
Loren Bell, WIC Program, DSHS
Juan Bocanegra, Downtown Human Services Council, Seattle
Rita Brogan, Task Force Member, and METRO, Seattle
Jeffers Chertok, Professor of Sociology, Eastern Washington University, Cheney
Beverly Gabrio, Task Force Member and Board of Directors, Food Lifeline, Seattle
Maurice H. Foisy, Professor, Political Science Department, Western Washington University, Bellingham
Corine Foster, Emergency Food Assistance Program, Department of Community Development, Olympia
Kathy Freidt, Assistant Director, Department of Community Development, Olympia
Dierdre Godfrey, Fair Budget Action Campaign, Seattle
Lois Irwin, Partnership for Rural Improvement, Spokane
Tony Lee, Catholic Charities, Seattle
Larry Lengyl, Spokane City-County Employment Training Consortium
Michael Levenson, Surplus Commodities Program, Department of General Administration, Auburn
Bernice Morehead, Division of Income Assistance, DSHS, Olympia
Frances Fox Piven, Professor of Political Science, City University of New York, New York, New York
Christine Pratt-Marsden, National Anti-Hunger Coalition, Lynnwood
Jim Snider, Eastern Washington Area Agency on Aging, Spokane
K. C. Spangler, Food Resource Network, Seattle Food Committee
Larry A. Stanley, Empire Bolt and Screw, Inc., Spokane
Jennifer Stucker, School of Social Work and Human Services, Eastern Washington University, Cheney
Thomas Sykes, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, The Evergreen State College, Olympia
Robert Theobald, Participation Publishers, Wickenberg, Arizona
Meg VanSchoorl, Community Revitalization Team, Department of Community Development, Olympia
Pat Wendler, Director, Spokane Food Bank, Spokane
Terry Wittman, Department of Human Resources, City of Seattle

Other Key Resource People, Root Causes Committee:

Nancy Amadei, Freelance Writer, Washington, D.C.
Katherine Briar, Assistant Secretary for Children, Youth and Family Services, DSHS, Olympia
Lisa Brown, Professor, Economics Department, Eastern Washington University, Cheney
Rob Fersh, Director, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.
Issac Shapiro, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington, D.C.
Cheryl Wehler, Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.

CURRENT PROGRAMS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:

"Food Assistance in Washington State" Resources

Loren Bell and Rebecca Waite, WIC Program, DSHS, Olympia
Dick Court, Bureau of Aging and Adult Services, DSHS, Olympia
Rob Fersh, Lynn Park, Ed Cooney, Vivien Gabor, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.
Carrie Fisher, Washington State Food and Nutrition Council, Seattle
Corrine Foster, Department of Community Development, Olympia
Kathy Freidt, Special Assistant to the Governor for Human Services, Olympia
John Froyd, Western Washington Food Coalition, Seattle
Stefan Harvey, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington, D.C.
Callie Hutchinson, Tennessee Hunger Coalition, Knoxville, Tennessee
Carol Johnson, School Food Services, Seattle Public Schools
Bernice Morehead, Laurel Evans, Food Stamp Program, Division of Income Maintenance, DSHS, Olympia
David Ottey, Emergency Food Network, Tacoma
Lennea Peters, Northwest Regional Food Network, Spokane
Trish Twomey, University Food Bank, Seattle
Virginia Whitlatch, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia
Zy Weinberg, Texas Association of Community Action Agencies, Austin, Texas

WHAT CAN WE DO?: Task Force Recommendations

Reviewers of Task Force Preliminary Recommendations:

Steven A. Bauck, EMM Northwest Harvest, Seattle
Lisa Brown, Professor of Economics, Eastern Washington University, Cheney
Steve Burger, Union Gospel Mission, Seattle
Lynda Flanagan, Joyceann Hagan, The Food Connection, Tacoma
Kathryn Freidt, Special Assistant to the Governor for Human Services, Olympia
Vivian Gabor, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.
Chris Gerke, Blue Mountain Food Share, Walla Walla
Maxine Hayes, M.D., Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, Seattle
Joan Lindall Holcomb, Helpline House, Bainbridge Island
Carol Johnson, Seattle School District Food Service
Perry G. Keithley, Virginia Whitlatch, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia
Tony Lee, Catholic Charities, Seattle
Larry Lengyl, Spokane City-County Employment and Training Consortium
Russell M. Lidman, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, The Evergreen State College, Olympia
Jeff McElhinney, Northeast Washington Rural Resource Development Association, Colville
Rev. Otis J. Moore, Emergency Feeding Program, Seattle
Bernice Morehead, Laurel Evans, Division of Income Assistance, DSHS, Olympia
Louise O'Neil, Senior Services of Snohomish County
David Ottey, Emergency Food Network of Pierce County
Lynn Parker, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.
Christine Pratt-Marsden, National Anti-Hunger Coalition, Lynnwood
Bill Riley, Mike Williams, Kittitas County Action Council, Ellensburg
Peter Schnurman, Food Lifeline, Seattle
Elizabeth Schott, Evergreen Legal Services, Seattle
Betty Lou Sherry, Ph.D., R.D., Maternal and Child Health Program, University of Washington, Seattle
Jim Snider, Eastern Washington Area Agency on Aging, Spokane
Jennifer Stucker, School of Social Work and Human Services, Eastern Washington University
Joe Valentine, Family Independence Program, DSHS, Olympia
Debbie Ward, School of Nursing, University of Washington, Seattle
Pat Wendler, Spokane Food Bank
Terry Wittman, City of Seattle

To order report appendices, contact:

Governor's Task Force on Hunger
c/o Northwest Regional Foundation
E. 525 Mission
Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 484-6733

Photo Credits

Cover photo: Terry Pagos, Seattle

	Page
International Child: Elaine Briere, Ladysmith, B.C.	2
Line waiting at Mission: Colin Mulvany, Spokane	6
Elderly woman in front of house: Betty Udesen, Seattle Times	8
Migrant men cooking: Pat Brown, Department of Social & Health Service (DSHS), Yakima	11
Senior Nutrition Program — Man at lunch: Joe Nuess, Spokane	13
Summer Feeding Program — Father & son: Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	14
Migrant woman and child: Pat Brown, DSHS, Yakima	16
Hitchhiking to Seattle: Colin Mulvany, Spokane	17
Woman and children in emergency shelter: Elaine Briere, Ladysmith, B.C.	21
Summer Feeding Program — child with milk: Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	22
Carolyn Downs Clinic — Woman at WIC appointment: Jan Park, Seattle	26 26
Summer Feeding Program — sisters: Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	28
Senior Nutrition Program — Women at lunch: Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	28
Boy with box of cheese: Christopher R. Anderson, Spokane Spokesman Review	29
Rural food bank: Betty Udesen, Seattle Times	30
Fremont food bank: Elaine Briere, Ladysmith, B.C.	32
Man in doorway: Elaine Briere, Ladysmith, B.C.	42
Wheat pile: Neil House, Department of General Administration, Auburn	45
Summer Feeding Program — Girl with apple: Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	46
Senior Nutrition Program — Man and milk carton Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	49
Carolyn Downs Clinic — Woman at WIC appointment Jan Park, Seattle	50
Summer Feeding Program — Kids with apples Kimberly Hetherington, Spokane	53

Dear Governor Gardner:

I support the findings and recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Hunger.

Please help make Washington State a "hunger-free zone" by implementing the Task Force recommendations through administrative change, legislative initiative and advocacy at the federal level.

Thank you,

_____

_____

_____

_____

The Honorable Booth Gardner
Governor, State of Washington
The State Capitol
Olympia, WA 98504